

SPLC



Southern Poverty Law Center

2020

Impact Report

The SPLC has tracked hate groups and domestic extremists' activities for four decades — exposing their threats to our democracy and documenting their growing influence. The events of 2020 — a deadly global pandemic, racial justice protests, and fraudulent claims about the presidential election — were used as opportunities for hatemongers to sow racial division, circulate propaganda, and recruit members.

BY THE NUMBERS

1,404

hate groups and anti-government groups tracked across the country.

168

Confederate monuments and symbols removed from public spaces.

179,282

downloads of our Sounds Like Hate podcast.

18.7M+

page views of Intelligence Project material.

IN 2020, THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

- ▶ Informed the public about the increased mobilization and lethality of extremists through our report, ***When the 'Alt-Right' Hit the Streets: Far-Right Political Rallies in the Trump Era***, detailing far-right, anti-government, and white nationalist threats in the United States.
- ▶ Served as a primary source to over 2.7 million people after a **presidential debate referenced Proud Boys**, a SPLC-designated hate group.
- ▶ **Testified to Congress** on alarming incidents of white supremacy in the military.
- ▶ Campaigned for the **removal of Confederate symbols** in public spaces — which culminated in the January 2021 Defense Bill mandating the removal of Confederate symbols and names from all U.S. military outposts; provided technical assistance for Confederate monument removal across the country, the pace of which accelerated after high-profile police killings of Black men and women across the country.
- ▶ **Alerted poll workers and state election officials** to threats posed by extremists to intimidate voters and disrupt the election process ahead of the presidential election and Senate runoffs in Georgia.
- ▶ Combated online radicalization of youth, in partnership with **American University's Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab (PERIL)**, by providing free resources designed to help caregivers, educators, and others recognize and respond to radicalization in the COVID-19 era.
- ▶ Exposed the ties of **elected and appointed government officials** to hate groups and white nationalist outlets like VDARE and correspondents like Jack Posobiec.
- ▶ **Defended conversion therapy bans from anti-LGBTQ hate groups' attacks** and held hate groups accountable for their harassment and violence through innovative legal action.
- ▶ Launched a new podcast, ***Sounds Like Hate***, an audio documentary about the dangers of everyday people engaged in extremism and ways people have escaped a life of hatred.

The South has been historically overlooked as a viable national political organizing force, a perception that changed for many in 2020. The region is home to some of the most robust and transformative change movements in our nation's history. To effectively counter the structural racism and other forms of oppression in this region, we're heavily investing in building capacity for democratic organizing and civic participation.

BY THE NUMBERS

\$12M **7,425** **100k+**

provided to grassroots Get Out the Vote efforts in our Deep South states.

voters contacted through the efforts of SPLC's Ballot Cure Program.

students participated in social justice projects made possible by SPLC funding.

1.4M+

voters contacted through Vote Your Voice efforts.

53,000+

media stories citing SPLC research and advocacy.

IN 2020, THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

- ▶ Sued Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana to ensure **equitable access to the ballot amid COVID-19 and onerous absentee voter restrictions** that harmed Black voters, high-risk voters, voters with disabilities, low-propensity voters, membership organizations, and voter engagement organizations.
- ▶ Increased 40 civic engagement organizations' capacity with \$12 million in **Vote Your Voice initiative** grants for grassroots mobilization activity, supporting Black- and Brown-led voter outreach in our core states often ignored by traditional funders.
- ▶ Supported nonpartisan voter registration drives in schools, registered 1,899 students, and promoted civic engagement in schools with \$67,000 in grants through our Learning for Justice **Future Voters Project**; this project also provided classroom resources on voting rights and voter suppression. Awarded an additional \$250,000 to support innovative social justice projects for more than 100,000 students nationwide.
- ▶ Coordinated 2,500 volunteer hours and 100,000 phone calls to voters in Deep South states through our **Power Hours Program**.
- ▶ Mailed absentee voting information to 148,000 older, high-propensity voters of color **in Georgia**. SPLC also funded **25 official absentee drop boxes** in Fulton County, Georgia, one of Atlanta's most populous counties.
- ▶ **Helped overturn two Jim Crow relics in Mississippi**: removed confederate symbol from state flag and, through public education around two initiatives, reformed how state-wide elections are won.
- ▶ Halved the absentee ballot rejection rate in the Georgia elections compared to the June primary through the **SPLC Ballot Curing Program** by contacting 7,425 voters in Georgia to help them "cure" small procedural mistakes on their ballots.
- ▶ Won important victories for people with previous felony convictions through critical litigation in Florida to **end voter suppression tactics that disenfranchise millions of people for outstanding legal financial obligations**.

During 2020, the pandemic laid bare longstanding systemic racism and exacerbated an already severe wealth gap. The spread of COVID-19 and its rippling economic and social consequences disproportionately harmed the communities we work alongside for equity and justice. We quickly mobilized, leveraging our resources to address critical needs during this national crisis.

BY THE NUMBERS

19,000+

incarcerated people received information on CARES Act stimulus benefits.

91

active cases currently being litigated.

41

new lawsuits filed.

115,880

educators joined our online network.

24.5M

page views of Learning for Justice material.

190,000+

participants in the SPLC's in-person and online professional learning through Learning for Justice.

140

people in detention granted bond or parole.

IN 2020, THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

- ▶ Granted \$2 million to fund over **604,000 meals** to help families in the Deep South, putting food on tables amidst increased unemployment and shelter-in-place orders.
- ▶ **Won our class-action lawsuit against Betsy DeVos' Department of Education** over a proposed rule that would have funneled much-needed CARES Act relief from public to private schools.
- ▶ Helped release people from detention where they remained at increased risk of contracting COVID-19 and **held the criminal justice system accountable** for its blatant disregard for the health and safety of human lives.
- ▶ Forced ICE to comply with court-ordered health assessments, protecting detained people at heightened risk of COVID-19 complications, as part of our fight to **reduce populations in abusive immigrant detention**.
- ▶ Informed over 19,000 people incarcerated in our Deep South states on benefits available to them through the **CARES Act stimulus. Protected access to housing, utilities, unemployment allowances, stimulus benefits, other public services** and lessened wealth-based discrimination in the justice system.
- ▶ Provided critically needed rapid-response **resources on trauma-informed approaches to distance learning** to families and educators amid COVID-19 school closures.
- ▶ Promoted just, humane and anti-racist migration and asylum policies, **defended immigrant workers' rights** — many of whom were deemed essential during the pandemic — and provided legal support to immigrants who were arbitrarily imprisoned.
- ▶ Advocated to **end overly punitive discipline practices and policing in schools**, which feed institutionalization and juvenile justice system involvement, disproportionately harming Black and Brown children and children with disabilities. We litigated 12 lawsuits defending the due process rights of students who'd been unjustly disciplined in their schools.
- ▶ Nearly doubled the online audience of Learning for Justice from 157,638 to 273,518 by helping educators navigate difficult but necessary **classroom discussions on American racism and police violence** after the tragic killings of Black men and women at the hands of police and vigilantes.
- ▶ **Facilitated professional learning** for over 190,000 educators who participated in virtual trainings or on-demand webinars with our anti-bias, anti-racist education specialists.

SPLC Year in Review

JANUARY

January 10th

SPLC files lawsuit representing families separated at the U.S.-Mexico border.

January 24th

Federal Court orders two Arizona groups to stop harassing Phoenix-area churches for assisting migrants, following SPLC lawsuit holding them accountable for hatred.

FEBRUARY

February – March

SPLC sponsors “Raise Our Vote” to identify and register people in South Florida counties with previous felony convictions and whose rights were restored under Amendment 4.

February 13th

SPLC and partner’s Public Fund for Public Schools initiative launches tool to track voucher legislation nationwide.

February 14th

Federal Court rebukes Trump Administration’s attempt to force work requirements and other barriers to Medicaid following SPLC lawsuit in Arkansas.

MARCH

March 16th

With our partners, SPLC calls on officials in our core states to ensure that the health and safety of people in jails and prisons in the Deep South are protected from the virus.

March 19th

SPLC joins nearly 600 organizations calling on state officials to issue moratoria on all utility shutoffs due to nonpayment.

APRIL

April 3rd

Federal Court decides one-of-a-kind SPLC lawsuit, challenging Mississippi’s failure to provide a uniform public school system as it is obligated to under the post-Civil War Readmission Act, may move forward.

April 20th

Federal judge orders Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to review everyone at heightened risk of severe complications from COVID-19 and release them following SPLC filing in nationwide class action suit. Following this order, SPLC releases resources to assist communities with custody re-determinations on behalf of individuals in detention.

April 27th

Hatewatch publishes blog post on how protests against state-imposed stay-at-home orders are attracting far-right groups like the Proud Boys.

JULY

July 23rd

Learning for Justice releases new classroom film, *Bibi*, which tells the powerful story of a gay Latinx man and his father, whose journey explores identity and intersectionality.

June 30th

SPLC joins #StopHateforProfit campaign to pressure social media companies to disallow hate organizing and extremist content on their platforms.

June 25th

Victory in our lawsuit against the Alabama Secretary of State, allowing counties to implement curbside voting and in three of Alabama’s most populous counties, medically at-risk voters could bypass burdensome absentee ballot requirements.

June 16th

SPLC announces launch of Vote Your Voice – a multi-year, up to \$30 million campaign to fund capacity-building for grassroots democratic organizing in the Deep South.

June 15th

The Supreme Court issues decision affirming LGBTQ rights, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. SPLC filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the groundbreaking case.

June 4th

SPLC partakes in national day of mourning, a response to the unjust killings of Black people including Ahmaud Arbery, Sean Reed, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, George Floyd, and too many others.

JUNE

June 3rd

SPLC launches Y’all Means All campaign to celebrate Pride month.

May 12th

Civil Rights Memorial Center publishes online children’s activity book and virtual tour to enhance accessibility to SPLC’s museum amid pandemic closures.

MAY

May 4th

SPLC victory in Tennessee highlights national campaign to keep public money in public schools as judge strikes down state voucher law targeting Davidson and Shelby counties.

AUGUST

July 28th

Releases new report with Giffords Law Center – *Stand Your Ground Kills: How NRA-Backed Laws Promote Racist Violence*.

August 23rd

Republican National Committee adopts resolution condemning SPLC’s work to identify hate groups that malign groups of people based on their immutable characteristics.

SEPTEMBER

September 3rd

SPLC, with partners, issues report showing school policing has increased negative outcomes for students.

September 4th

Major victory as Federal Court blocks a DeVos Department of Education rule that would have diverted COVID-19 relief funds away from public schools.

September 16th

SPLC releases first-ever presidential transition memo—Vision for a Just America—outlining a transformative action agenda for a more equitable compassionate nation.

OCTOBER

October 5th

Learning for Justice releases classroom film, *The Forgotten Slavery of our Ancestors*, introducing the sparsely known history of Indigenous enslavement.

October 19th

The Supreme Court agrees to hear SPLC’s lawsuit challenging a Trump Administration policy requiring asylum-seekers to remain in Mexico as they await their hearings.

NOVEMBER

November 3rd

General Election – SPLC prepares by issuing Protect Your Vote, outlining what voters can do if they encounter intimidation at the polls.

November 23rd

SPLC files second lawsuit representing Ashley Diamond, a Black, transgender woman harassed and denied medical treatment in the Georgia Department of Corrections.

November 24th

Settlement is reached in panhandling lawsuit as SPLC and allies end police harassment of people panhandling in Montgomery, AL.

DECEMBER

December 10th

Women file medical grievances with assistance from SPLC and allies over medical abuse by gynecologist in Irwin County sustained while in ICE custody.



OUR MISSION

The Southern Poverty Law Center is a catalyst for racial justice in the South and beyond, working in partnership with communities to dismantle white supremacy, strengthen intersectional movements, and advance the human rights of all people.

400 Washington Avenue Montgomery, AL 36104 // (334) 956-8200 // www.splcenter.org

COVER SPLC client Rosemary McCoy is fighting Florida's modern-day poll tax. During 2020, we escalated our efforts challenging the discriminatory requirement that returning citizens pay all fines, fees, and restitution before they can vote. This policy provides no safeguards to the public and only serves to prevent millions of people from accessing the ballot.