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Nonprofits can Play Key Role in Lifting Record-Low Voter Turnout ***New report shows those contacted by nonprofits more likely to participate***

WASHINGTON, DC: December 2, 2015 – While much attention has been devoted to the record low turnout in recent elections, one group is looking for ways to engage those often left out of the process. With over 100 leaders of major nonprofit networks present at a kick-off event in Washington, DC, Nonprofit VOTE released its new report, *Engaging New Voters: The Impact of Nonprofit Voter Outreach on Client and Community Turnout*. This new report makes the case for nonprofits nationwide to engage their clients and communities served in voting and elections.

“Nonprofits are trusted messengers with deep roots in communities overlooked by others. This makes them uniquely positioned to play an important role in increasing voter turnout,” states Brian Miller, executive director of Nonprofit VOTE, “When they engage the communities they serve in voting and elections, they are highly effective at creating new voters and expanding the electorate as this report shows.”

The report examines the effect nonprofit service providers have on raising voter turnout rates of otherwise low turnout populations when asking their clients to register or pledge to vote. Prepared in collaboration with CIRCLE at Tufts University, it highlights the demographics and turnout rates of 29,000 voters contacted by 129 nonprofits across nine states in the 2014 midterm election. The study found:

Personal contact by nonprofit staff and volunteers increased voter turnout rates across all demographics. Compared to the average rate for registered voters of the same demographic, voter turnout was 5 points higher for Latino voters, 10 points higher for black voters, and 16 points higher for Asian American voters. These represent increases of as much as 43% relative to other registered voters. Those with incomes under \$25,000 that were contacted by nonprofits turned out at rates 9 points higher, despite being younger and more racially diverse than other low-income voters.

Nonprofits had their biggest impact on people least expected to vote and most likely to be overlooked by partisan campaigns. More than half the voters engaged by nonprofits were identified by campaigns prior to the election as “low propensity” voters, i.e. voters not expected to vote in the 2014 midterm. They were twice as likely to be under age 30 and four times a likely to new American voters – Latino and Asian-American with a history of low turnout.

A diverse set of 129 local nonprofits participated in the study, including service providers and community-based organization such as community health centers, family service agencies, multi-service agencies, and community development and advocacy organizations.

“Nonprofits across the nation, from health centers to food banks, already have a mission to empower and strengthen the communities they serve. Helping those same people become active members of their community through nonpartisan voter engagement makes our neighborhoods and our country even stronger,” adds Jatrice Martel Gaiter, Exec. Vice Pres. of External Affairs with Volunteers of America.

“Partisan campaigns focus narrowly on likely voters pre-identified as supporting their candidate,” adds Steve Taylor, Senior Vice President for Public Policy at United Way Worldwide. “As a result, the majority of young and new citizen voters are never contacted by campaigns about the election. Nonprofits, who collectively reach over 100 million people nationally, can help fill this critical gap through nonpartisan voter engagement. This report should provide the encouragement they need to do exactly that.”

The report is available online at nonprofitvote.org/engaging-new-voters/.

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About Nonprofit VOTE – *Nonprofit VOTE partners with America's 501(c)(3) nonprofits to help the people they serve participate and vote. It partners include United Way Worldwide, National Council of Nonprofits, Independent Sector and 126 national and state nonprofit networks. It's the leading provider of nonpartisan voter engagement resources to help nonprofits integrate voter outreach into their activities and services.*

About CIRCLE – *the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement at Tufts University's Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service does research on youth civic education and political participation.*