

THE GEORGIA RUNOFF 2022

- STORY FROM THE DOORS -

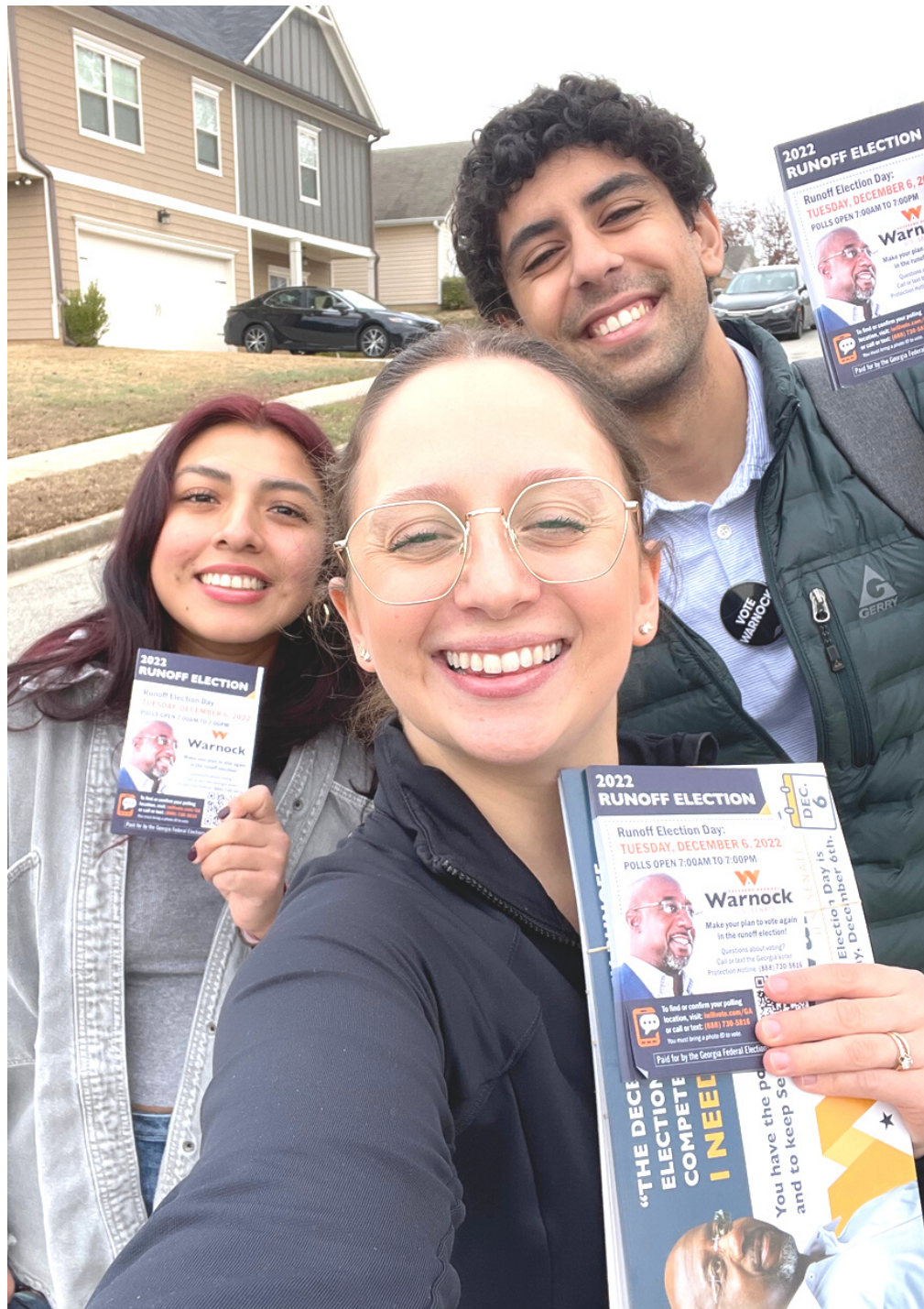
written by Sara Penenberg
Photography Team Lamont

My team of four Lamont staffers and I made our way to Georgia to help with the Reverend Raphael Warnock runoff campaign- a decision that came into play after our win with Governor Lamont's campaign. With learning about the runoff, we knew the importance of a strong field team and volunteer penetration. Volunteers and staff on the ground is what wins elections.

We made our way to Georgia to help with the Warnock campaign field operations, spearheaded by the Georgia democrats. We were positioned in the East Point office in Atlanta's Fulton county, the area that pulled Warnock over the edge on election night. We were met by an amazing team and their involved volunteers.

When knocking doors the importance of early voting was very apparent. Connecticut adopted this with a ballot referendum for 59% for vote yes for early voting. As we knocked in Georgia we were able to get up-to-date information from our vote builder database to see who had already voted in the area. For Georgia's runoff, constituents had an option of a week of early voting and mail-in voting leading up to the election. We learned from constituents that this opened up the avenues to early voting, but also led to changes in polling locations that differed from election day locations.

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Pictured Lamont Staffers - Alisson Meza, Hisham Rushaidat and Sara Penenberg
Photography Team Lamont

When working in an early voting state there is a need to have a longer and more robust Get Out the vote (GOTV) field operation. Election day is now election week with the new voting avenues given to constituents. From my time in Georgia, I feel a very overwhelming sense of joy knowing that Connecticut is following in the path with early voting.

What did we hear on the doors?...

We hit the doors four days leading up to election day and knocked in conjunction with many out-of-state volunteers. When reaching out to voters in the Georgia Fulton county area, we hear a renowned yes for Warnock. At the doors we heard TV ads were penetrating the base. A woman let us know she didn't know much about the candidates, but, from what she saw on TV, she was persuaded to vote for Warnock. She voted early with another 1.9 million people in Georgia.



Pictured Lamont Staffers, Warnock field Team, and Civil Rights Volunteer Photography Team Lamont

The team in Georgia had four weeks to pull together a strong GOTV campaign. The total campaign was able to knock an approximately 150,000- 175,000 doors in those four weeks leading to the runoff. This operation would not have been possible without the strong out-of-state volunteer base.

We spoke with a man about the importance of voting for a candidate like Warnock to address issues like affordable housing, increase in the minimum wage, and abortion rights and women's healthcare. The constituent was a fellow Connecticut - a UConn Husky alumnus - creating a connection between us. Our conversation seemed to have led to a change in his vote to support Warnock in the runoff.

Our out-of-state team had a moving moment when we met a fellow volunteer who was an activist during the civil right movement. She was a black woman involved in the 1964 Freedom Summer. She said seeing white people joining Warnock's race reminded her of the white people, local and who traveled from the Northeast), that stood with the black folks during the Freedom Summer.

After Warnock being on the ballot five times for two years, he was able to win a six year seat in the senate. Georgia has shown us that voting early works and an involved voting base leads to strong turn out and change. A Georgia voter on election day told us "I feel good every time I vote!". Georgia did it - it held the senate for the democrats with a 51 majority.