

Kirsten Costedio

Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus

Intern

Summer 2017

Thanks to the Wellman Hill Grant I had the amazing opportunity to spend the summer of 2017 interning for the Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus. The Progressive Caucus is an all-volunteer organization that fights for economic, political, racial, environmental and international justice by engaging and educating members of the North East Ohio community. Because of the grassroots nature of this organization I was able to participate in and have a large impact on a variety of projects.

One of my main projects for the summer was developing and implementing the Progressive Caucus' first candidate endorsement process. I had the opportunity to work with a wide range of Northeast Ohio community leaders and citizens to create a questionnaire that encompassed all of the most pertinent issues facing Northeast Ohio's communities. These questionnaires were filled out by candidates for city councils, school boards, and mayor to name a few. Along with this project, I also helped to facilitate two Cleveland mayoral candidate forums in which our organization invited the mayoral candidates to answer questions directly from Northeast Ohio constituents.

Another project that I worked on throughout the summer was organizing volunteers for the 'Fair Congressional Districts for Ohio' campaign. I assisted people in signing out petitions and gained experience using the voter activation network by creating walking lists for the volunteers. Throughout the summer with the Progressive Caucus I also attended and facilitated

numerous ‘communities issues forums’ across Northeast Ohio in which speakers were brought in to educate voters about issues that would be appearing on their ballot; for instance a volunteer from the League of Women Voters attended each forum to educate others on the ‘Fair Congressional Districts’ initiative.

Lastly, over the course of the entire summer I attended many rallies and protests with the Progressive Caucus in order to both grow our membership and show our existing membership that the organization is truly dedicated to the cause of fighting for social justice.

I am incredibly grateful to the Hill family for giving me the opportunity to spend my summer serving the community of Northeast Ohio and working to create social change.