

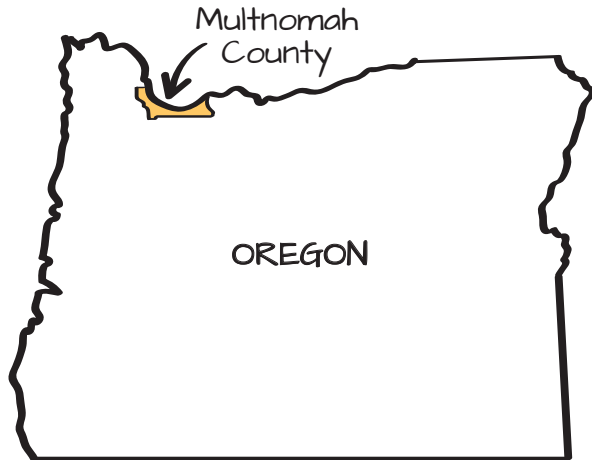
The story of...

OREGON

DA

FOR THE

PEOPLE



This is the story of Oregon DA for the People's campaign to change the role of the district attorney in Multnomah County, Oregon.



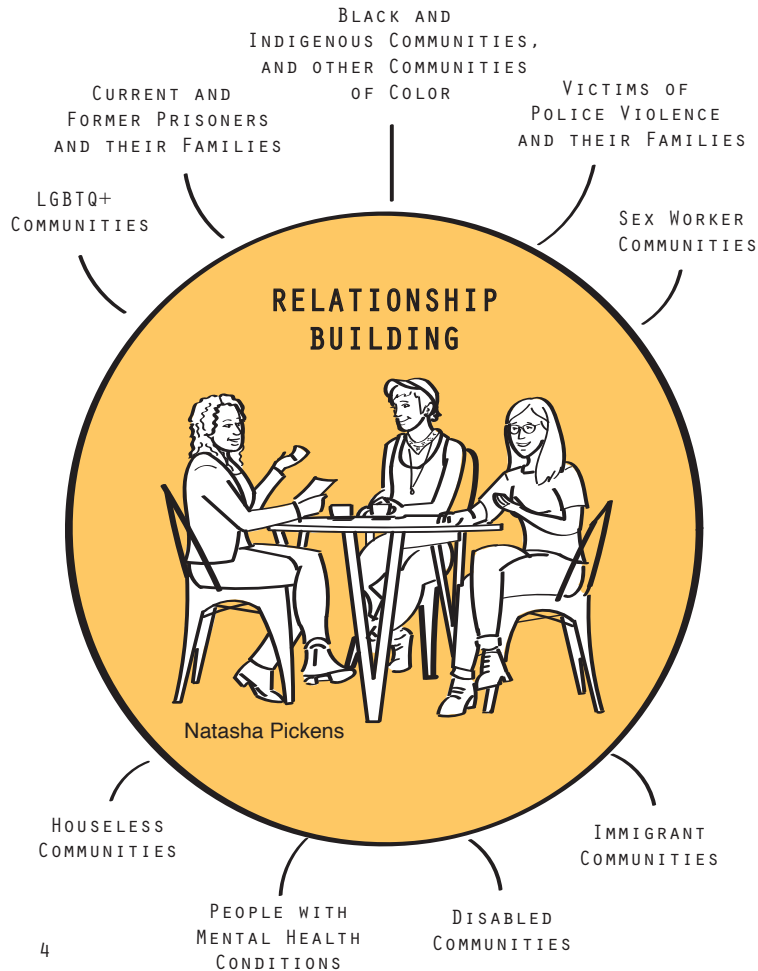
Pacific Northwest Family Circle

Peace Not Police

SURJ PDX

OREGON
DA
FOR THE
PEOPLE

Pacific Northwest Family Circle and the Portland chapter of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ PDX) launched Oregon DA for the People in 2017 with goals of educating the public about and electing better district attorneys (DAs), the most powerful elected position in the criminal legal system.



Our first action in Multnomah County was building relationships with other organizations and community members directly impacted by harmful decisions made by DAs. As with other parts of the criminal legal system, these harms particularly target Black, Indigenous, and Immigrant communities.

I'm gonna
tell you about
my grandson
Quanice Hayes...



Donna Hayes

STORYTELLING

Storytelling was foundational to the campaign. We built stories to help people understand the problems of now, and to envision what the future could be like. We gathered the stories our opposition would tell and crafted our responses.

THE PLATFORM



STOP TARGETING BLACK,
BROWN, INDIGENOUS,
AND IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES



DECLINE TO PROSECUTE
PEOPLE WITH MENTAL
HEALTH CONDITIONS



HOLD POLICE AND
PROSECUTORS
ACCOUNTABLE



TREAT KIDS
LIKE KIDS



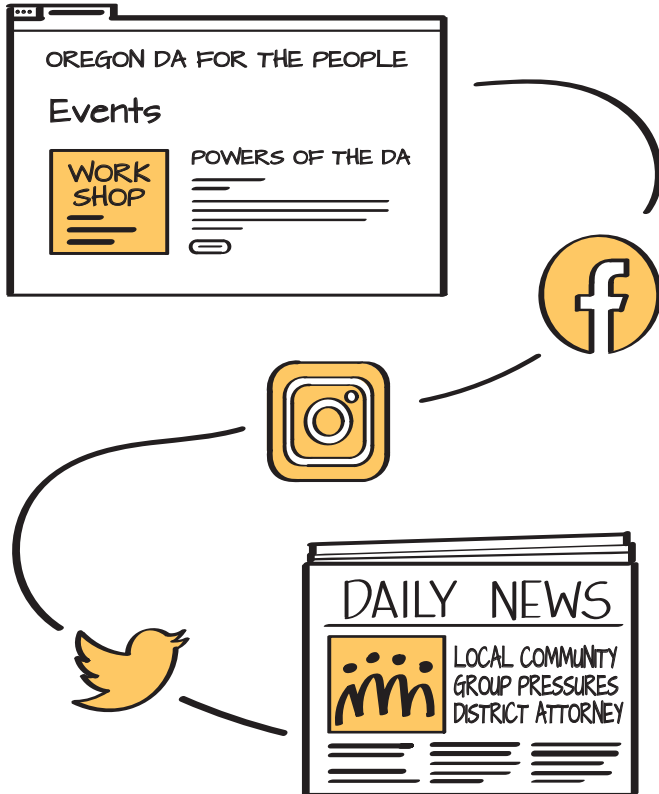
COMMIT TO ENDING
MASS INCARCERATION



DECriminalize
HOUSELESSNESS, SEX WORK,
AND DRUG USE

Over several months, our organizers built a loose coalition of organizations, listened and asked questions, and distilled the community's demands for Oregon DAs into six pillars—the People's Platform.

MEDIA + OUTREACH



Meanwhile, we built ways to tell the coalition's stories to our target audiences, including a website, social media accounts, and a list of local and national media contacts. We hosted workshops about the powers of the DA and how those powers are abused. We asked more people to organize with us.

We want a
real choice in
who we elect.



Irene Kalonji

**RECRUIT + ENGAGE
CANDIDATES**

DA candidates often run unopposed. That is one of the ways DAs maintain power. Our organizers contacted local public defenders and criminal justice and civil rights organizations to show them the platform and encourage multiple candidates to run.

COALITION
FOLX

DISABILITY
RIGHTS
OREGON

SURJ
PDX

PORTLAND
FREEDOM
FUND

STROLL
+
DECRIM
OREGON

LIBERATION
LITERACY



PACIFIC
NORTHWEST
FAMILY
CIRCLE



OREGON DA
FOR THE
PEOPLE

DISTRICT
ATTORNEY
CANDIDATES



COMMUNITY
LED
CANDIDATE
FORUM

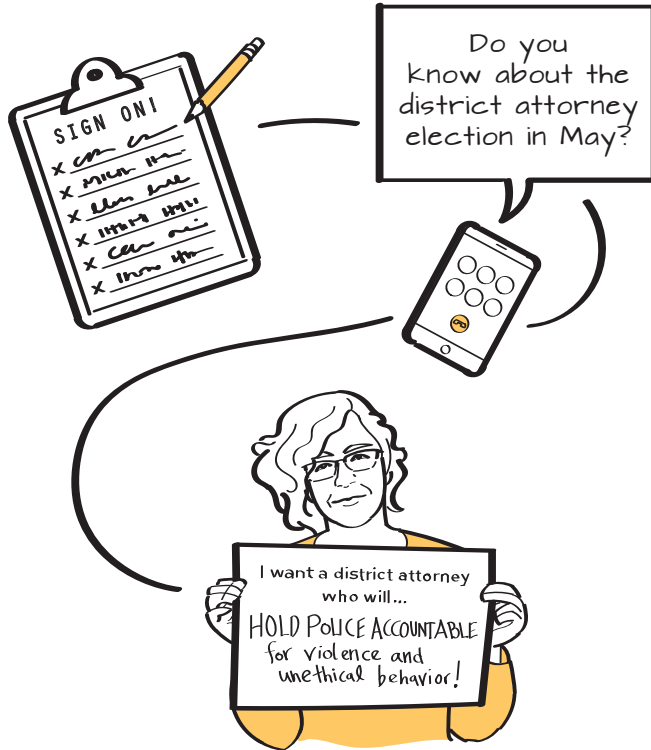
We did not endorse a candidate. Throughout the race, we pushed all of the candidates to focus on the People's Platform demands.

In October 2019, we launched our campaign publicly with a candidate forum, where coalition partners posed questions directly to DA candidates based on their personal experiences.



PRESSURING CANDIDATES

We held a series of in-person meetings between coalition partners and individual candidates. We pressured the candidates to support the demands in the People's Platform and to commit to working with us if they were elected.




Maria Cahill

REACHING VOTERS

By the time of the May 2020 election, our coalition had collected 900+ signatures supporting the People's Platform, canvassed neighborhoods and events (pre-Covid), phoned hundreds of voters through phone banks, and attended protests.

CANDIDATE REPORT CARD



Grading the Candidates

This DA candidate voter guide and report card draws on statements made by the candidates on their websites, through social media, at the Oregon DA for the People community-led candidate forum, and in a recent [virtual debate](#). We have met separately with both candidates.

Summary of our Report Card

Multnomah County deserves a DA who gives more than lip service to addressing the harm caused by our crisis of mass incarceration. While the candidates often use similar language, their policies are very different. In this report card, we focus on policies that harm vulnerable community members or reinforce the power of a violent system.

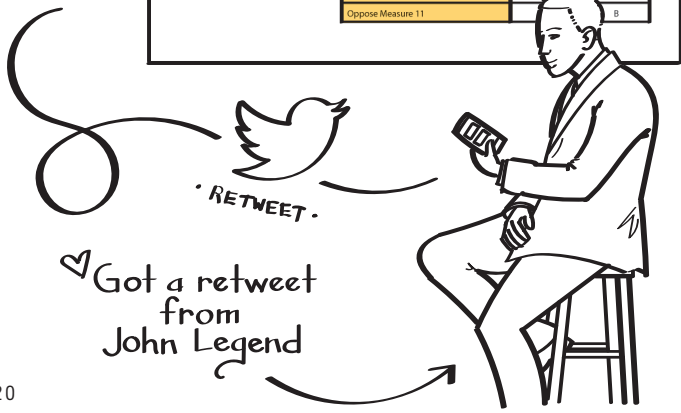
If we come off as tough graders, it's because we know that the status quo fails to protect our community and keep us safe.

[Jump to the full report card](#)

Topic	Ethan Knight	Mike Schmidt
Overall Grade	D	B
Responding to the COVID-19 crisis	F	A-
Decline to prosecute mental health	D	D
Decriminalize homelessness	D+	B
Decriminalize drug use	D	C-
Decriminalize sex work	F	C-
Acknowledge racism in current systems	D-	B+
Oppose non-unanimous juries	A	A
Denounce Gun Violence Reduction Team	F	F
Increase data analysis and transparency	D	A
Uphold the Brady Rule	F	A
Enforce police "do not call" list	F	A
Oppose plea deals	F	B
End cash bail	B	A
Abolish the death penalty	F	A
Oppose Measure 11	F	B

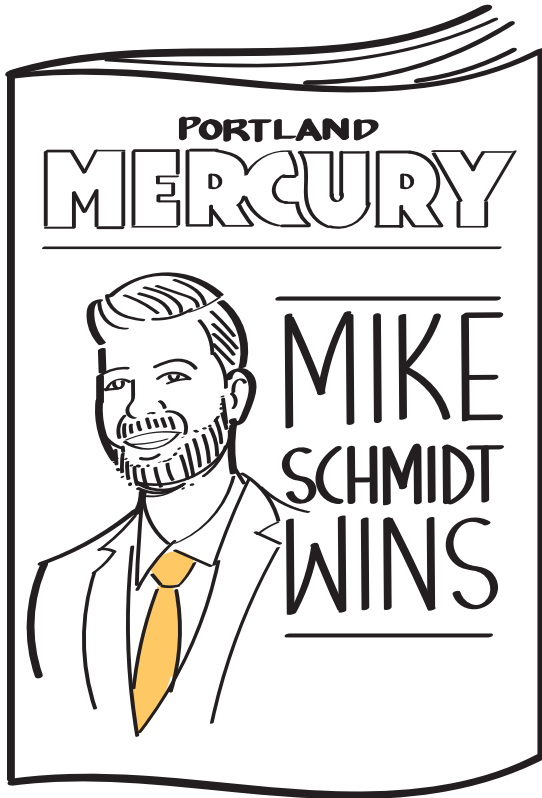
Grading Guide

A Highest Grade	
Candidate supports all or the majority of the platform demands on this topic, with very specific plans for how to implement them.	Candidate supports all or the majority of the platform demands on this topic, with some plans to implement.



As the election approached, we surveyed the candidates and created a report card that assigned them grades on their commitments to platform demands. We continued to educate people about the powers of the DA and how to lay the groundwork to hold them accountable to their promises later.

ELECTION DAY

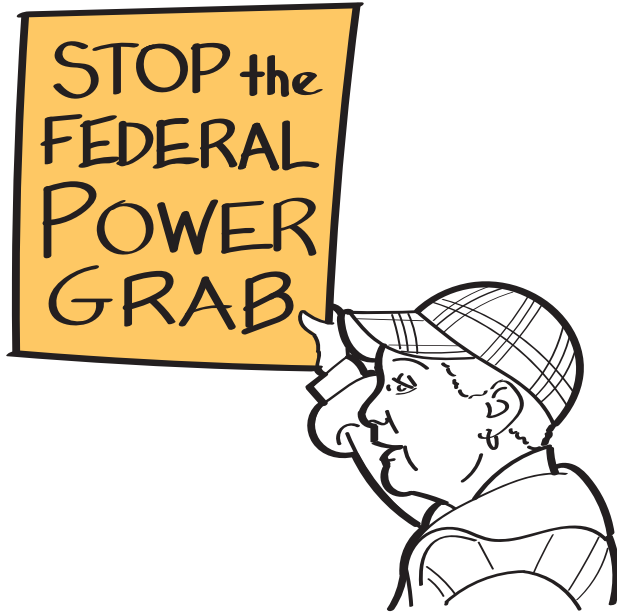


The DA candidate who rated the highest on our report card, Mike Schmidt, won the election. As he took office, our campaign got to work to track his first 100 days to make sure he followed through on his commitments.



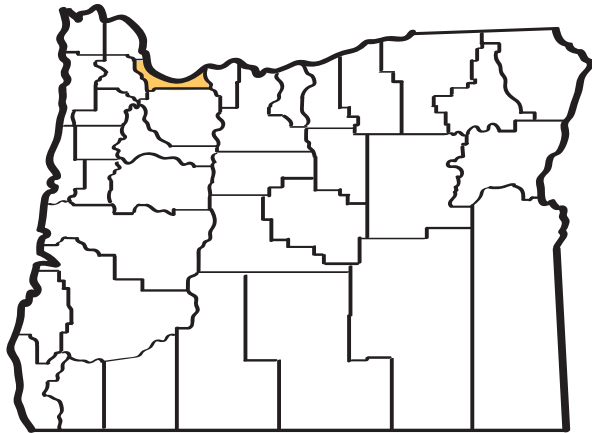
KEEPING
UP THE
PRESSURE

Through monthly newsletter reports, social media posts, and organized meetings between Mike Schmidt and our partners, we continue to push him on the demands of the platform and the needs of those directly impacted by the criminal legal system.



Sylvia Dollarson

At the height of the Black Lives Matter uprising in summer 2020, Mike Schmidt announced he would not prosecute protesters for non-violent offenses. We helped organize to push back against federal prosecutors when they started charging Portland protesters with federal crimes to undermine the new DA's power to decline to prosecute.



**Oregon DA for the
People can help support
conversations about the
role of the district attorney
and how it can change.
Please contact us if you're
interested in talking about
organizing happening in
your community!**

THANK YOU!

Pacific Northwest Family Circle
Portland Freedom Fund
Liberation Literacy
Unite Oregon
Decrim Oregon
Stroll
Disability Rights Oregon
Portland Association of Teachers
Democratic Socialists of America, Portland
Portland Metro People's Coalition
ACLU of Oregon
First Unitarian Portland
Justice Advocates
Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) PDX
Clackamas County SURJ

Philly DA for the People
Brooklyn Community Bail Fund
Court Watch NYC
The Justice Collaborative

Contact:

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