

**NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR MASSACHUSETTS**

Annual Report 2008-2009



# NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR MASSACHUSETTS

## **Mission**

Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts (N2N-MA) builds political power in low-income and working class communities around economic justice issues. By developing local leadership, organizing a broad coalition of allies, and winning elections, we hold politicians accountable to the needs of their constituents and build a progressive majority for the Commonwealth.

## **Agenda**

The Working Family Agenda – good jobs, education and training; affordable child care, health care and housing; a welfare safety net; and progressive taxation – is the cornerstone of our program.

## **Organizing Model**

N2N-MA empowers low-income people to get involved in the democratic process year-round.

Our grassroots organizing model includes:

Leadership Development

Voter Empowerment

Issue Advocacy

Coalition Building

Legislative Lobbying

Electoral Campaigns



# A NEW PHASE FOR NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

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## **New Leadership**

N2N-MA hired Juan Leyton in 2008 to serve as our next Executive Director. An esteemed leader of color who has dedicated his career to building power in low-income communities, Juan is a perfect match to lead us into our next phase of growth.

## **Green Justice**

In 2009 N2N-MA will begin a grassroots political education effort with our membership to talk about how environmental justice and economic justice issues intersect. As the national dialog on the green economy unfolds, we will be at the table at the state level, ensuring that new efforts to “green the state economy” benefit low-income people and communities.

As part of this new focus, N2N-MA has joined the Green Justice Coalition, a partnership of community groups, labor unions, environmental organizations and other allied organizations that is building a broad-based effort in support of a sustainable, equitable and clean energy economy in the state. The group is working to ensure that our region’s growing green economy will create quality jobs, healthier communities and energy savings for low-income residents.

## **Training Strong Grassroots Leaders**

N2N-MA is expanding its political education and training program to ensure that our members have a deep analysis of how power dynamics operate in their communities and the structural reasons for the injustices they face. A new Training Department has been created, staffed by two organizers with expertise in popular education, who will develop curricula and train N2N-MA members, staff and allies in a wide range of topics.



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*“My own life was transformed almost twenty years ago when I got involved in organizing myself. As an immigrant and a leader I was striving to be included in the political process, because when the voices of immigrants and people of color are included, we can transform what doesn’t work in our society and our democracy.”*

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# LANDMARK VICTORIES FOR PROGRESSIVE TAXATION

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*“I’m glad that multi-national companies making profits in Massachusetts will be making more of a contribution to our state.”*

- Karen Arsenault,  
N2N-MA member

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## **Making Corporations Pay Their Fair Share**

Six years ago N2N-MA members across the state identified closing corporate tax loopholes as a priority. They recognized that corporate tax avoidance was diverting revenue from crucial social programs that they relied on daily. For many members, their first experience with N2N-MA was going door-to-door on the corporate tax reform campaign.

In the years that followed, N2N-MA members were successful in closing a number of individual corporate loopholes, but we were unable to win on comprehensive corporate tax reform. The 2006 gubernatorial election changed that. N2N-MA members interviewed one of the candidates, Deval Patrick, and in the meeting he committed to closing corporate tax loopholes. N2N-MA endorsed him and Governor Patrick was then elected with the support of 20,000 infrequent voters contacted through our efforts.

After his inauguration, Governor Patrick again met with N2N-MA members face to face in the corner office. He said to them, “This is your office. This is your house.” and reaffirmed his commitment to corporate tax reform. Working closely with the Administration, N2N-MA formed a coalition of community and labor groups that waged a campaign to close these loopholes once and for all.

This long hard-fought struggle culminated in the passage of comprehensive corporate tax reform in the summer of 2008. The measure was expected to generate nearly \$300 million in revenue for social programs in FY2009. This was a victory for tax fairness and has already stopped hundreds of millions in budget cuts.



Courtesy of Springfield Republican

### **Saving the Income Tax**

Together with our allies N2N-MA defeated Question 1, a 2008 ballot initiative that would have eliminated the state income tax and cut 40 percent of the state budget. We turned the filing of this regressive proposal into the catalyst for a statewide public education campaign about progressive taxation.

- ❖ We reached 9,485 infrequent voters through one-on-one direct contact, many of whom were registered to vote through our efforts.
- ❖ We won by a margin of 3 to 1.

This decisive victory puts us in a great position for this year's campaign to respond to the fiscal crisis and push for progressive revenue solutions.

# BUILDING LOCAL GRASSROOTS POWER

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## Marching Across Massachusetts for CORI Reform

In May of 2008, our members joined with allies in an historic five-day 50-mile march for criminal record reform. CORI reform would improve access to jobs and housing for people with criminal records, and eliminate the abusive and erroneous use of those records.

The marchers walked from Worcester to Boston, and were greeted at the State House by hundreds of supporters, including legislators, clergy, union members, people affected by the broken CORI system, and their families. Together we called on the Legislature to take action.

N2N-MA's organizing on CORI reform has transformed the push for change from a small campaign, into a statewide movement that unites a diverse and powerful set of grassroots groups.

Our goals for the campaign in 2009 include:

- ❖ Shorten the timeline for sealing criminal records so that people with CORI records can access good jobs and affordable housing
- ❖ Promote fair hiring –eliminate the practice of criminal record “check the box” as a screening tool; ensure that criminal records are not considered until the final step of the hiring process



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*“We walked here from Worcester pushing through  
back pain, swollen knees and diabetes.  
We carried our food, our clothes, and medications.  
And we carried years of stigma, rejection, and recovery.  
But we have hope and faith in the democratic process.  
We hope the Legislature is listening.”*

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-Debra Murray, N2N-MA Board Member

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*“Neighbor to Neighbor is a strong organization with a wealth of experience building power with low-income and working class communities. They have an established model of electoral organizing that the rest of the Pushback partners will benefit from.”*

- Sondra Youdelman,  
Pushback Network Vice-Chair

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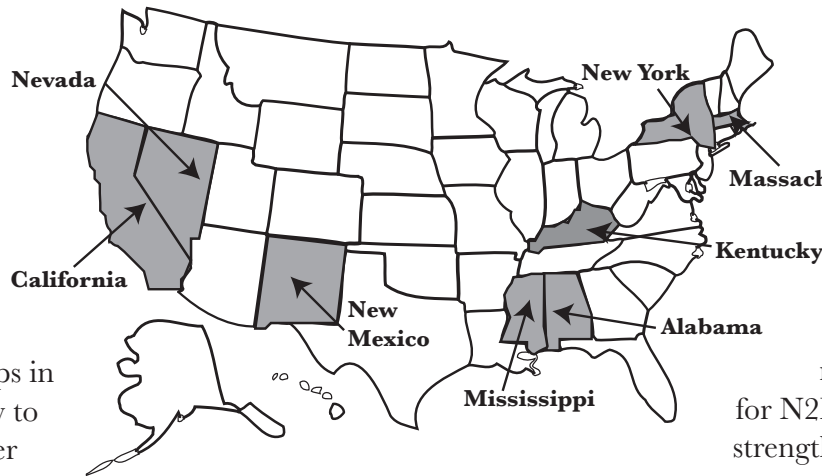
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# MAKING CHANGE NATIONWIDE

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## Building a National Movement for Economic Justice

In 2008, N2N-MA joined the Pushback Network, a national coalition of organizations that bring low-income people of color into the political process on a mass scale through electoral organizing and issue advocacy. N2N-MA was invited to be an anchor organization in Massachusetts, and we are training other groups in the network on how to set up a C3-C4 voter contact program, how to develop an individual donor fundraising program, and how to build a statewide grassroots base.



Massachusetts is one of the states closest to winning progressive governing power. Such a breakthrough would allow Massachusetts to become both a “blueprint” state for policy-making, and a concrete alternative to conservative ideology. Having one or more such “blueprint” states is of urgent significance to the national progressive movement. A top priority for N2N-MA in 2009 will be to strengthen our linkages within the state, and nationally to make this vision a reality.

# HISTORIC 2008 ELECTION PUTS US ON THE BRINK OF A PROGRESSIVE MAJORITY

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Photo by Jacy Ippolito

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*“Neighbor to Neighbor had a transformative impact on my campaign. Their expertise and ability to educate and mobilize thousands of volunteers and voters allowed me to win a decisive victory, despite the challenge of running a sticker campaign.”*

- State Rep. Carl Sciortino

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## **Epic Election Battle – N2N-MA Wins Sticker Campaign in Somerville**

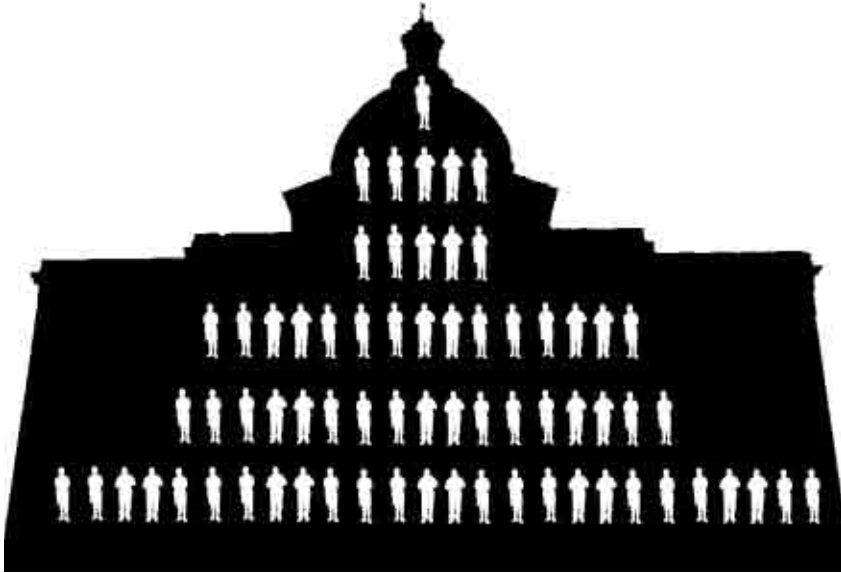
Many people said it couldn't be done. Since 1984 no candidate had won election to state office in the city of Somerville without having their name on the ballot. This year N2N-MA proved them wrong, helping to reelect Representative Carl Sciortino by running a massive sticker campaign.

N2N-MA staff took the lead on organizing volunteers, recruiting hundreds to join the effort, calling their

neighbors, knocking on their doors, and spreading the word about the campaign. Over 400 volunteers made calls and handed out information on Election Day, making the Sciortino ground operation one of the largest in state history.

Winning a decisive victory, N2N-MA helped keep this seat progressive, and re-elected a key ally who is a strong advocate for economic justice.

While history was made in the 2008 Presidential Election, N2N-MA also continued to make steady progress towards a progressive majority in the Massachusetts House of Representatives.



81 votes are needed for a majority in the State House of Representatives. Right now, we have 69 consistent votes for economic justice.

*Just 12 left to go for a majority!*



## Mass Alliance

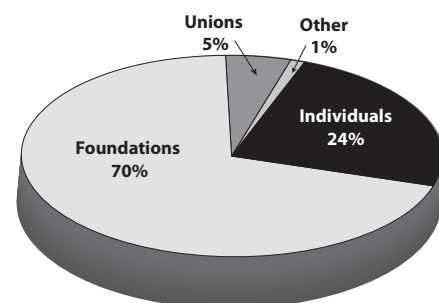
*– our statewide coalition  
for progressive power!*

Mass Alliance is a statewide coalition of twenty-two progressive organizations committed to collaboration, education, advocacy, and electoral work to advance the progressive agenda. The group builds unity across a range of progressive issues – from health care, economic justice and equal marriage, to the environment, labor rights and reproductive choice.

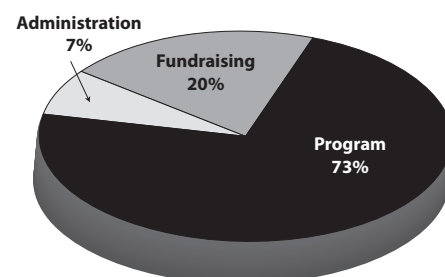


# 2008 FINANCIAL REPORT

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>501(c)3 Education Fund</b>	<b>501(c)4 Action Fund</b>
Individuals	\$230,150	\$51,242
Foundations	\$598,450	\$112,112
Time restricted released from restriction	\$85,000	
Unions	\$250	\$58,260
Other	\$133	\$61
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$913,983</b>	<b>\$221,675</b>



<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>501(c)3 Education Fund</b>	<b>501(c)4 Action Fund</b>
Program	\$633,633	\$132,248
Admin	\$59,951	\$18,224
Fundraising	\$177,689	\$34,519
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$871,273</b>	<b>\$184,991</b>



## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	<b>501(c)3 Education Fund</b>	<b>501(c)4 Action Fund</b>
Current Assets	\$315,659	\$33,588
Fixed Assets	\$3,363	\$491
Other Assets	\$6,931	\$3,026
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$325,953</b>	<b>\$37,105</b>
Accounts Payable	\$3,800	\$3,000
Other Current Liabilities	\$33,714	\$5,000
Long Term Liabilities	\$181	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$37,695</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$288,258</b>	<b>\$29,105</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$325,953</b>	<b>\$37,105</b>

\* As of 12/31/08. An itemized copy of our financial statement is available upon request.

# Join Us



## Send Your Contribution Today!

You continued support will help us build the grassroots power to make Massachusetts a truly progressive state.

Your donation will enable us to:

- ❖ Strengthen and expand our grassroots leadership around the state
- ❖ Win higher wages, increased funding for state programs and progressive taxation for the Commonwealth
- ❖ Elect more progressives and our own volunteer leaders to public office

Please return the enclosed envelope with your contribution or visit our website, [www.n2nma.org](http://www.n2nma.org), to give instantly online.

## Join our Legislative Action Network!

Go to our website, [www.n2nma.org](http://www.n2nma.org), and join our activist network. You will receive urgent alerts about action needed around issues affecting working families in Massachusetts.

## Making Contributions to Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts

N2N-MA welcomes and depends on your financial support to fund our grassroots organizing work. N2N-MA's 501(c)3 Education Fund supports our grassroots organizing, leadership development, issue advocacy and non-partisan voter empowerment programs. Our 501(c)4 Action Fund supports our legislative lobbying, partisan organizing, and coordinated electoral work.

*“The only way to build a just society is to make sure that the people who have been underserved by and excluded from government are aware of their interests and have the means to protect them. I am happy to donate to N2N because I know that N2N is successful in building sustained grassroots power that will transform our country.”*

- Paul Spirn, N2N-MA donor

*Together we can  
build a powerful  
movement for  
economic justice!*



# HOW TO CONTACT

## Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts

[www.n2nma.org](http://www.n2nma.org)

### **Boston**

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### **North Shore – Lynn and Salem**

112 Exchange Street, Lynn, MA 01901  
(781) 598-6866: phone • (781) 598-6864: fax

### **Central Mass – Worcester, Fitchburg & Leominster**

484 Main Street, Suite 350, Worcester, MA 01608  
(508) 754-6866: phone • (508) 754-1774: fax

### **Western Mass – Holyoke & Springfield**

235 Eastern Avenue, Springfield, MA 01109  
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