



INSTITUTE FOR
**CITIZENS &
SCHOLARS™**

**CIVIC SPRING PROJECT
GRANT APPLICATION**

* required answer

MAIN CONTACT FOR PROPOSAL	
<i>You should be a representative of the lead partner of the proposal (i.e. the organization within the proposal that holds either 501(c)(3) status or fiscal sponsorship.)</i>	
First Name*	Christopher
Last Name*	Suggs
Email*	chris@kinstonteens.org
ELIGIBILITY SCREENING	
<i>Please confirm your eligibility for consideration by selecting all statements that apply to your organization/partnership or proposal.</i>	
Can you receive a grant? * <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does at least one applicant have 501(c)(3) status or the engagement of a fiscal sponsor with the ability to receive, manage and report on the use of grant funds? 	Yes
Do you meaningfully and constructively engage youth? * <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does your proposal include partnership(s) with youth-ked or youth-driven organizations (s)? Groups that do not have civic education experience per se, but that do have a demonstrated passion for 	Yes

<p>a mission consistent with the goals of the project and a desire to constructively engage youth in their mission, are also encouraged as partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does at least one member of your partnership have experience partnering with young people? ▪ Was there meaningful youth participation in the development of the proposal? 	
<p>Do you have the capacity to deliver in the current context over the summer timeframe? *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is one of your partners an existing organization that already operates well in the civic learning space, engages with young people and has demonstrated a passion for the project goals? ▪ Does at least one member of your partnership have experience working with the population(s) whom you intend to serve? (e.g. students, seniors, 	<p>Yes</p>

<p>domestic abuse victims, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does each of the partners have senior officer with decision-making power involved in the project? ▪ Do you have the virtual, technical, and technological capacity to operates in the current COVID-19 environment? (This includes ensuring broadband/Wi-Fi access to participants, either through the grant or with existing infrastructure, where required) 	
<p>Will you meet a local need? *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do you have local partner(s) with experience connecting/working with the populations whom they want to serve? The local element of this program is essential. Applicants can be local organizations OR national organizations partnering with local organizations. 	<p>Yes</p>



ORGANIZATION DETAILS	
<i>Please note: this page is exclusively for the details of the lead partner making the proposal. There will be the opportunity to provide details for the other organizations within your proposal as you proceed through the application process.</i>	
Organization Name *	Kinston Teens, Inc.
Is this a 501(c)(3) entity, or fiscally sponsored? *	501(c)(3)
City *	Kinston
State*	NC
Zip	28501
Mission statement	To empower young people through service, leadership and civic engagement.
Web address	www.kinstonteens.org
States organization is active in:	NC
Estimated number of young people served annually	400-500
Estimated annual budget (\$)	72,000
Number of permanent staff	2
Number of volunteers (annual basis)	700
Select practices of the organization	Discussing Current Events, Service Learning, Democratic Simulations, News Media Literacy, Action Civics, School Climate Reform

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom Instruction ▪ Discussing Current Events ▪ Service Learning ▪ Extra Curriculars ▪ Student School Governance ▪ Democratic Simulations ▪ News Media Literacy ▪ Action Civics ▪ SEL ▪ School Climate Reform ▪ Research Validation 	
<p>PROPOSED PROJECT DETAILS</p> <p><i>Now for the information about your proposal's program - starting with the questions below. Please fill in the requested information about the location(s) and community(ies) that you intend the proposed program to serve.</i></p>	
<p>State(s) of intended delivery *</p>	<p>NC</p>
<p>Community(ies) of intended delivery *</p> <p>Rural Urban Suburban Mix</p>	<p>rural</p>
<p>PROPOSED PROJECT DETAILS</p> <p><i>Longer format questions, describing your proposal in detail.</i></p>	
<p>1. Please provide your project narrative.*</p> <p>Define project deliverable(s) (i.e. civic actions, performance, learning content delivery, etc.)</p>	<p>As a youth-led and youth-serving organization, we see firsthand the efficacy and success when young people are educated, engaged and empowered to be involved in civic processes. Kinston Teens was founded because of a lack of engagement of young people at the city council, county commission, and school board level in the conversations and decisions that most affect them. Since its founding in 2014, Kinston Teens has become a driving force of youth civic engagement in our local community and beyond. Kinston Teens has made an impact on the lives of nearly 5,000 youth through our membership efforts,</p>



and project-specific outcome measurements as they connect to the goals of the Civic Spring Project

Youth Summit, community workshops, volunteer initiatives, leadership development seminars, and programs and assemblies at local schools.

Our organization has been on the frontlines responding to crises and natural disasters—including hurricanes and the COVID-19 pandemic—along with organizing against gun violence, poverty, and health disparities. 2020 is and will be remembered as one of the most transformative years in our lifetimes. Between a deadly pandemic virus, the decennial census, a major election, and national unrest around the extrajudicial killings of black people, we find it more than necessary for our organization to be on the frontlines empowering youth in our community with the tools, skills and resources to lead on these issues. A primary objective of this initiative will be building coalitions among youth-led and youth-serving organizations in Kinston and Lenoir County to increase the capacity of youth-led organizing efforts in the community. This will include an online group to connect members of youth-led organizations, regular convenings (virtual or in-person as safe), and collaborative organizing efforts. Additionally, we look forward to the opportunity to be able to utilize funding to hire young people as community organizers and/or provide them with compensation for their labor, realizing that community organizing is often exhausting and time-consuming yet young people are often not able to be financially supported in their civic involvement.

With the support of the Civic Spring project, we anticipate our 2020 efforts to be focused in three areas: Grassroots/Neighborhood Organizing, Collaborative and Digital Organizing, and Voter Engagement/Get-out-the-Vote.

I. Grassroots/Neighborhood Organizing

Kinston Teens believes that a neighborhood’s residents are its biggest and most impactful stakeholders. Therefore, organizing and building a sense of civic responsibility in our community’s neighborhoods is a central part of our organizing values and this plan.

The city of Kinston is located in rural, eastern North Carolina and has been devastated by major hurricanes in recent years. East Kinston, a predominantly neighborhood in Kinston, was hit hardest by recent hurricanes, and struggles to regain its footing as the neighborhood and city leaders grapple with issues related to concentrated poverty and crime. This area, one of the main gateways into the City and downtown, is unfortunately characterized by dilapidated residences, abandoned structures, outdated and

dense public housing, and poorly-maintained vacant lots. The neighborhood is also dramatically underserved by commercial enterprises, resulting in scarce employment opportunities and limited access to goods and services for local residents.

East Kinston has been severely plagued by poverty, crime, and a lack of economic and community development. A 2014 report by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill found that Census tract 103 which is home to more than 2,000 citizens and comprises the geographic bulk and most densely populated area of East Kinston, is ranked the #1 most economically distressed census tract of all 2,195 Census tracts in the state of North Carolina. These rankings are based on three criteria: poverty rate, per capita income, and unemployment.

East Kinston is also home to a significant number of our community's young people. Unfortunately, youth-involved crime has been a major issue plaguing the City of Kinston and disproportionately affecting young people in East Kinston. Through our forums, surveys, and on-the-ground research, many people in the community attribute poverty as a major cause for the City's overall crime problem—but specifically a lack of positive opportunities for young people for the City's juvenile crime problem.

Kinston Teens has placed significant emphasis on organizing and community development in the East Kinston neighborhood since its inception. In addition to leading voter engagement and public safety initiatives in the neighborhood, Kinston Teens has acquired blighted properties and transformed them into community amenities — vacant lots into small parks and community gardens, and an abandoned home into a community center. With the support of the Civic Spring initiative, we will build on our organizing efforts in East Kinston and hope to serve as a model for other community organizing efforts in Kinston and beyond.

Our Neighborhood/Grassroots Organizing will include:

- Coordinating door-to-door canvassing (as safe) throughout July-November 2020 to: register voters, distribute nonpartisan voter education materials, and speak with citizens regarding civic engagement processes.
- Host three (3) Voter Engagement Trainings (online) to train community members on election basics, voter registration, and distribute voter education materials so that they are able to educate and register other members of our community.

- Partnering with churches and religious organizations to train them on voter registration/engagement, and encourage the implementation of voter engagement initiatives into their ministry. Encouraging them to utilize their weekly worship gatherings (in-person or virtual) to discuss current events and ways their congregants can get involved in 2020 efforts.
- Training our youth on phonebanking and textbanking to safely engage with our community regarding current issues and organizing efforts.
- Develop a monthly or bi-weekly printed and digital newsletter focused on current issues and organizing efforts. This newsletter will be distributed widely online, but also printed and distributed at central locations in the neighborhood to ensure that members of our community without internet access are able to stay abreast in our actions during this time of social-distancing.
- Implement additional voter education efforts into Kinston Teens' existing programming including our Teen Town Hall, Member Nights, community beautification projects, etc.
- Hiring youth from Kinston Teens and NC Field to serve as paid, part-time community organizers to lead these efforts.

II. Collaborative and Digital Organizing

Kinston Teens is known for its creative youth and community engagement initiatives. One facet of this plan will be building equitable relationships with community organizations that align with our mission and the goals of this plan to achieve our desired outcomes. Building and utilizing these relationships will help us leverage resources, maximize impact and collaborate on projects to achieve common objectives. Particularly, a significant focus of our work will be using communications and digital strategies to increase voter engagement—as a way to better engage young people, and practice social distancing. This will include:

- Beginning a social media campaign to raise awareness of the election, candidates and placing an emphasis on absentee voting/vote-by-mail. There is still lots of misinformation and a general lack of information on the absentee voting process in North Carolina, and considering that it will prove extremely safe and beneficial come the November 2020 for vulnerable communities, we plan to strongly encourage this voting method in our organizing efforts.
- Continuing our relationship with Democracy North Carolina to provide training and support for our volunteers along with the volunteers of our partner organizations and other community groups in voter registration and voter engagement. Additionally, using Democracy North Carolina's nonpartisan voter education materials in our outreach efforts.



- Utilizing our relationship with the City of Kinston to:
 - Partner with Kinston Housing Authority to coordinate voter education, registration, and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts in the City’s public housing facilities—especially the City’s six elderly housing facilities.
 - Host Voter Education presentations during two Kinston City Council meetings between July and November 2020.
 - Partner with Kinston Parks & Recreation to display voter education materials/signage in recreation centers and (as safe) host voter registration initiatives at recreation events.
 - Utilize our Mayor and City Councilmembers as ambassadors for our voter engagement efforts writing op-eds, participating in social media campaigns, and volunteering at our events and canvassing efforts. Kinston’s municipal elections do not take place during the 2020 election cycle.
- Developing and implementing a social media campaign using a variety of digital content mediums to distribute civic education materials and information about the November 2020 election.
- Create digital content, graphics and educational materials to be shared with community groups and partner organizations for them to use in their print and digital voter engagement efforts.

III. Voter Activation/Get-out-the-Vote

The last facet of this plan includes activating the community members we’ve engaged throughout our organizing efforts to get out and vote. As early voting starts in October through Election Day in November, Kinston Teens will work toward turning our engaged citizens into informed voters. Our efforts in this facet will include:

- Coordinate a safe “Rides to the Polls” effort encouraging carpooling and providing transportation to polling locations at different times during Early/One-Stop Voting and on Election Day.
- Ensure accurate and detailed information regarding vote-by-mail/absentee voting is publicized widely and encouraged ahead of the deadline.
- Utilize social media to share creative graphics that share photos of polling locations, precinct hours, and what neighborhoods/area make up each precinct in Lenoir County.
 - As safe as possible, host events at polling locations (modified versions of our traditional ‘Party at the Polls’ events) that encourage community members to cast their ballots. These events may include facemask giveaways, free food, speeches by non-candidate community leaders, etc.



2. Please provide a brief description of each partner organization, including: *

- a. Mission and vision
- b. Organizational goals
- c. Annual budget (2019/20)
- d. Leadership structure and number of staff
- e. Community/ies served
- f. Experience working with and/or being led by youth, where applicable

Our primary partner for this project will be NC Field. We will have support from additional partners including Kinston Community Health Center and the City of Kinston.

Kinston Teens and NC Field have a relationship dating back to 2011 when Kinston Teens' Founder & CEO, then 11-years old, gave the opening statement at NC Field's 2nd Annual "YouthSpeak" event addressing issues affecting young people in Kinston and Lenoir County. NC Field's Executive Director, Yesenia Cuello was the President of NC Field's Youth Council at the time. NC FIELD is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization based in Lenoir County that works with migrant and seasonal farmworker youth and families utilizing grassroots organizing principles to teach leadership, promote education and facilitate opportunities.

In 2019, Kinston Teens and NC Field formed a partnership with the Kinston Community Health Center to educate and empower young people around identifying and addressing health disparities in Kinston and Lenoir County. Kinston Community Health Center is a federally qualified health center servicing Lenoir County and surrounding areas. The work of this partnership includes organizing around the issue of food deserts in Lenoir County and working to provide residents with fresh, healthy foods; increasing the training capacity of Lenoir County youth in CPR and Mental Health First Aid; and empowering black and brown youth to be health ambassadors, sharing much-needed health resources from KCHC and other agencies with communities that may typically be hard to reach.

Recognizing how civic engagement is a necessary step in addressing the health disparities this partnership is already working to resolve, with the support of the Civic Spring initiative, our capacity will be increased to:

- Train and support the staff and volunteers of Kinston Community Health Center in civic engagement, and incorporating civic engagement and voter registration into their outreach and clinical intake programming.
- Build stronger understandings between NC Field's youth, predominantly hispanic group of youth 25 years and younger, and Kinston Teens' youth, a predominantly black group of youth ages 12-22, on the issues these communities face jointly and individually and the class, race and gender implications of these issues.
- Utilize KCHC support and training to ensure that in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, all of our organizing efforts are safe and in the best health practices for our organizers and community members.



	<p>Kinston Teens and NC Field will use the support and funding from Civic Spring to empower youth in Lenoir County to devise a plan and organize toward the creation of a Lenoir County Youth Council. This council will be an advisory board to the Lenoir County Commissioners and their agencies (Sheriff's Department, Board of Elections, Parks & Recreation, etc.).</p>
<p>3. Define youth representation and impact of the proposed project, including:*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The depth, breadth, and diversity of youth participants; b. The depth, breadth, and diversity of youth impacted beyond those participating directly; c. Outreach to and/or the inclusion of youth from communities historically excluded from civic opportunities; d. Area(s) of civic learning specifically targeted, including but not limited to: dispositions, skills, knowledge, capacities/social capital 	<p>The youth stakeholders in this project will primarily include youth who have been involved in the Kinston Teens and NC Field organizations. Various identities reflected in this group include black, latinx, immigrant, low-income, undocumented, FGLI college students, LGBTQ, disabled, and justice-involved. Considering our commitment to reaching and engaging underrepresented and underserved communities, the youth we focus on engaging outside of our organizations will often reflect these identities and demographics as well. These are youth from communities who are historically excluded from traditional civic engagement opportunities and civic/service organizations.</p> <p>Our plan is for youth to gain from this collaborative effort valuable community organizing skills, the ability to form nuanced arguments and views on issues facing young people, an increased network of peers committed to social change and civic engagement, and an increased network of adult allies and supporters.</p>
<p>4. Proposed project budget, including:* (File format accepted: xls/xlsx/pdf/zip, Maximum file size 1 MB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Staffing expenses broken out by individual 	<p>Attached</p>

<p>b. Cost assumptions</p> <p>c. Youth compensation structure, if any (e.g., percentage of grant funds to be paid to youth on staff or through microgrants to youth-led partnerships);</p> <p>d. d. Additional resources to be allocated to the project, where applicable.</p>	
<p>5. Describe community impact of the proposed project, including: *</p> <p>a. Acuteness of need being addressed in Project</p> <p>b. Proposed project's impact on this need (output, outcomes, efficacy, impact)</p> <p>c. c. Integration of local planning and response as part of Project</p>	<p>From this project, we envision a more civically engaged East Kinston, migrant farmworker community, and Generation Z in Lenoir County. We anticipate our impact to show that young people are more than capable of organizing and energizing a community around civic issues, and making lasting, positive differences in the civic structure of their community.</p> <p>Through this initiative, some numeric goals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registering or updating the registration of at least one thousand (1,000) voters • Hosting at least six (6) widely attended educational events on voter engagement, the census, and community organizing. • Youth from Kinston Teens and NC Field attending at least six (6) meetings of municipal and county boards in Lenoir County, and making formal presentations at three (3) of those meetings. • Increasing the online presence of NC Field and Kinston Teens by doubling their social media followings on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter through unique digital organizing and social media engagement strategies. <p>Earlier in this application we discussed Kinston Teens' work to spark community development in Kinston's East Kinston neighborhood. We anticipate a major impact of this initiative being a civically engaged citizenry in East Kinston, and ensuring that residents of the East Kinston neighborhood are meaningfully engaged in plans and discussions around the future of their neighborhood.</p>



	<p>Residents in East Kinston, along with the migrant farmworker community serviced by NC Field, are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis and the recurring major hurricanes that devastate our local area. An impact of this initiative will also be a stronger community network that can easily be mobilized to prepare for and respond to disasters in our community.</p>
<p>6. Any other relevant information You may be asked to provide additional materials to confirm what you have said in this application.</p>	

Kinston Teens
Civic Engagement Plan for Civic Spring Project
July 2020 - October 2020
As of July 16, 2020

Primary Goals

- Increase the political efficacy and capacity of youth and youth-led organizations in Lenoir County through training, collaboration and coalition building.
- Hiring youth as Community Organizers (one from Kinston Teens and one from NC FIELD) to compensate them for their time and labor spent registering voters, building grassroots organization, and empowering community members to be community advocates.

Focus Areas

I. Grassroots/Neighborhood Organizing

Kinston Teens will lead grassroots organizing efforts in the East Kinston neighborhood, surrounding the Kinston Teens Neighborhood Hub.

II. Collaborative & Digital Organizing

Kinston Teens and partners will implement a social media campaign focused on raising awareness of the 2020 election. We will work with NC FIELD to ensure that our efforts, on- and offline, reach the most marginalized and underserved areas of our community and that these groups are represented in local civic processes. Through our collaborative organizing, we will work towards the creation of a Lenoir County Youth Council.

III. Voter Activation/Get-out-the-Vote

Kinston Teens will use safe practices to help reduce any barriers citizens may face in casting their ballots in the 2020 General Election. This includes, coordinating a rides-to-the-polls effort, modified versions of our “Party at the Polls” events, and encouraging voters to participate in “vote by mail.”

Specific Goals

- Registering or updating the registration of at least five hundred (500) voters
- Hosting at least six (6) widely attended educational events on voter engagement, the census, and community organizing. At least 3 of these events should be in partnership with NC FIELD and in Spanish or both English and Spanish.
- Youth from Kinston Teens and NC FIELD attending at least six (6) meetings of municipal and county boards in Lenoir County, and making formal presentations at three (3) of those meetings.
 - To go with this, our organizations will host at least one public speaking training for our members.
 - One of these events may be a town hall event w/ representatives from different local governing boards (Pink Hill, Kinston, La Grange, Kinston, County Commissioners, School Board).
- Increasing the online presence of NC Field and Kinston Teens by doubling their social media followings on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter through unique digital organizing and social media engagement strategies.
- In the process of implementing this plan, Kinston Teens will work with NC FIELD to investigate and respond to community needs that arise as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes, but isn't limited to, addressing the lack of available testing opportunities, community needs for PPE, and/or challenges around health disparities and food insecurity.

Kinston Teens
Civic Engagement Plan for Civic Spring Project
 July 2020 - October 2020
 As of July 16, 2020

Budget for Plan

<u>Expense</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Salaries and Stipends	
Kinston Teens Community Organizer <i>At least one youth community organizer selected/hired by Kinston Teens to fulfill the work of the Civic Spring project plan. To be paid a \$3,000 stipend.</i>	3,000.00
NC FIELD Community Organizer <i>At least one youth community organizer selected/hired by NC FIELD to fulfill the work of the Civic Spring project plan. To be paid a \$3,000 stipend.</i>	3,000.00
Stipend Support for Youth <i>Additional budget for stipends to support canvassing efforts, poll transportation efforts, civic participation by young people in specific events/efforts, etc. (\$2,500 per organization)</i>	5,000.00
Total	\$11,000.00
Administration	
Institutional Support for Kinston Teens <i>Grant administration, insurance, bookkeeping, space rental, utilities, etc.</i>	10,000.00
Institutional Support for NC FIELD <i>Grant administration, insurance, bookkeeping, space rental, utilities, etc.</i>	6,000.00
Total	\$16,000.00
Program/Project Expenses	
Events <i>Trainings, 'Party at the Poll' type events, community presentations, etc.</i>	6,000.00
Kinston Teens T-Shirts and Promotional Materials <i>Production of t-shirts and promotional materials (pens, buttons, stickers, yard signs) with voter education/civic engagement targeted messaging</i>	3,000.00

Kinston Teens

Civic Engagement Plan for Civic Spring Project

July 2020 - October 2020

As of July 16, 2020

NC FIELD T-Shirts and Promotional Materials <i>Production of t-shirts and promotional materials (pens, buttons, stickers, yard signs) with voter education/civic engagement targeted messaging</i>	2,000.00
Kinston Teens Transportation <i>Expenses for transportation rental, mileage reimbursement, gas stipends, etc.</i>	3,000.00
NC FIELD Transportation <i>Expenses for transportation rental, mileage reimbursement, gas stipends, etc.</i>	1,500.00
Food and Refreshments <i>Food/snacks and refreshments for youth volunteers.</i>	1,500.00
Social Media Marketing <i>Budget for social media marketing/targeted advertising campaigns around civic issues.</i>	2,000.00
Lenoir County Youth Council <i>Expenses related to the development of the Lenoir County Youth Council</i>	2,000.000
Kinston Teens Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) <i>Purchase of gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, and other health/safety supplies for use with this initiative.</i>	1,000.00
NC FIELD Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) <i>Purchase of gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, and other health/safety supplies for use with this initiative.</i>	1,000.00
Total	\$23,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$50,000.00

Civic Spring Project Final Grant Report – Kinston Teens/NC Field

Name: Chris Suggs, Yesenia Cuello, Chasity Pate

Organization: Kinston Teens, Inc. /NC FIELD

Date: Project Completed 10/1/2020 – Submitted 10/23/2020

I. OUTCOMES FEEDBACK: Please list the outcomes proposed in your Civic Spring Project application and fill out the following table.

Outcome	Outcome Details:	How did you do on this outcome?	Lessons learned related to this outcome:
<p>1. Increase the political efficacy and capacity of youth and youth-led organizations in Lenoir County through training, collaboration and coalition building.</p>	<p>This was our foremost goal of the project, considering that we had been interested in strengthening the relationship between our organizations (Kinston Teens and NC FIELD) as well as engaging with other youth involved in the Kinston/Lenoir County community. We realized that there was different pockets of activism and civic change work happening in our community, but that these silos weren't in the best interest of our resources and could result in an excess expending of labor, duplication of efforts, or strained relationships.</p>	<p>We immediately launched a collaborative organizing initiative amongst our organizations, Kinston Teens and NC FIELD. Our goal was to allow our youth to devise plans and come up with solutions to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Lenoir County area, as well as start voter engagement initiatives to educate and register voters ahead of the 2020 election. Some of our efforts included hosting a combination of in-person and online Voter Engagement Trainings, in both English and Spanish; coordinating an effort to provide healthy produce & food boxes to families living in food deserts bi-weekly; launching a social media campaign and online website LenoirVotes to build enthusiasm for the election.</p>	<p>In our search to identify other youth and youth-led efforts in our community, we were surprised with that there were many more than we initially thought. This led to the creation of a Facebook Group with youth/youth-led organizations operating in Kinston, as well as the start of a database with our contact information, existing efforts/programs, and priority issue areas.</p> <p>One key takeaway was that even in the midst of social distancing, it was quite possible for us to build and sustain strong working relationships and hopefully long-lasting friendships amongst youth organizers and organizations. We learned to take advantage of the online tools at our disposal to build networks and communication avenues along.</p>

<p>2. Collaborative/Digital Organizing: social media efforts and online website</p>	<p>Throughout our project work period, we consistently discussed and implemented ideas to strengthen our organizations' online presence and ensure that we could disseminate as much important information across online platforms as possible. Some of these efforts included story campaigns on our Instagram, Facebook Live and Zoom events, and targeted efforts to increase the number of "likes" and followers on our pages. Through a combination of our voter registration efforts and the civic engagement survey we conducted, we realized that there was still a lack of information on the voter registration process and overall voting process for this election. This led to us spending September developing LenoirVotes.org, a one-stop information source for all things related to this election.</p>	<p>We are comforted and proud that we were able to fulfill this outcome based on both anecdotal and experiential data from our work in the community, as well as the data retrieved from our civic engagement survey we developed with CIRCLE.</p> <p>Our youth worked diligently for three weeks throughout September researching and compiling information for this website. There are similar initiatives in other counties throughout the state, and we were able to reach out to civic organization and election officials in those counties for inspiration and feedback.</p> <p>Since launching the site, we have also advertised it using social media marketing, in-person signage throughout the community, and with signage at early voting polling locations in our county.</p>	
<p>3. Civic Engagement Survey and informing future plans</p>	<p>With the support of CIRCLE, we developed a Civic Engagement survey to be completed by individuals involved in our organizations (Kinston Teens and</p>	<p>Within a week and a half, we were able to get 46 responses from members of our organizations. Following the completion of our collection period for survey</p>	<p>There were some information gaps we realized when reviewing the survey data that reflected disparities by age, involvement in our organizations (position –</p>

	<p>NC FIELD). This included our youth/members, parents, staff, board members and volunteers. The goal of this survey was to gain an understanding of our organizations' civic capacity now, how engaged our members currently are, and what is their current civic/political understanding. Initially, we planned to conduct another survey before the end of September once we've completed the Civic Spring project. However, as we analyzed the data, we decided it would be best to use it as a baseline for developing our organizations' civic engagement plans moving forward.</p>	<p>responses, we met with Kristian and Rey from CIRCLE to analyze the information.</p> <p>Immediately following our meeting with CIRCLE, it confirmed our thoughts regarding the lack of civic knowledge in our community and disparate levels of understanding about civic engagement. This pushed us to complete the LenoirVotes.org website within a week of reviewing the survey data to launch before the voter registration deadline in October. This website includes polling locations and times, the voter registration process, how to vote by mail, and how to find a sample ballot.</p>	<p>board member/youth/parent/etc) and which organization they were involved in. Our organizations plan to use this data to develop better practices for equitably teaching civic engagement to our organization communities in ways that cross language, age and level of involvement.</p>
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II. **MAJOR LESSONS LEARNED RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING:** Please share your reflections on each of the following categories listed in the left-hand column below. There are examples for a few to help you get started - please erase them as you fill in the table yourself.

	Lessons Learned/Takeaways
Outcomes	<p>When we initially applied for the Civic Spring project, we did not have major goals in terms of identifying outcomes and a path forward – our primary objective was to utilize the funding, community of practice and support from WW/CIRCLE to respond to the immediate needs our organization had recognized in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and upcoming election. However, the tools and support offered through this program helped us to consider the long-term plans of our organizations and how could we leverage the CSP to achieve those goals. In doing so, we were able to build a long-term coalition amongst youth-led efforts in our</p>

	community, launch a website that we plan to keep updated election after election to educate our community, and gain useful data to inform how we build civic power moving forward.
Process	Since the start of the CSP, we have hosted bi-weekly meetings of our working group to plan and implement our projects, as well as reflect on some of the current issues facing our communities locally and across the state and country. Since late July, some of the topics we have discussed include: summer spikes in COVID-19, return to school (in-person vs online), the September Presidential Debate, the Black Lives Matter movement, the injustice in Kentucky over the handling of Breonna Taylor’s murder, and Lenoir County Public Schools’ sudden transition to in-person learning. These have been heavy, emotionally tolling conversations – but conversations that our young people wanted to have. We adapted a number of processes from the Community of Practice to help the conversations run more effectively and center youth voice, including: rose/thorn check-ins at the start of every meeting, breakout rooms for planning/strategizing, having youth-only meetings as well as having meetings where adults are only in the room to listen.
The Environment/Context of your project	<p>Our work has happened this year with a tumultuous and challenging backdrop. We knew the work would be prefaced by the COVID-19 pandemic, the decennial census, a social and political uprising fueled by the Movement for Black Lives, and a polarizing election. However, there have been a number of other events and/or symptoms of these larger problems that we could not necessarily forecast and later influenced our work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Carolina public colleges/universities returning for in-person learning amidst the pandemic, while our local public K-12 schools started off virtual. By September, the colleges had begun a switch to virtual learning and the K-12 schools switched to in-person. This added a huge amount of stress and confusion to the youth involved in our organizations, trying to navigate school, work and community involvements such as this one. Throughout August, we were able to do a number of in-person, socially distanced events. September proved to be much more difficult because of these circumstances. • The death of Congressman John Lewis • The shooting of Jacob Blake and subsequent violence in Kenosha, Wisconsin • The first 2020 presidential debate
Your Local Community	One challenge we faced in the context of our local community was that there’s still a level of non-adherence to COVID-19 precautions in our community or a lack of caution. A number of organizations are still hosting in-person gatherings and events, and most businesses have reopened (if they ever actually closed). This posed a challenge throughout July-August as we were hosting virtual events, because of the rural technology disparities we experience and a lack of understanding on the necessity of these virtual events. One outcome of this was that we stressed the seriousness of the COVID-19 virus and adhering to precautions in our programming and

	messaging and organized face mask distributions targeting vulnerable communities.
COVID-19	<p>While we were intentional about thinking long-term about capacity-building and sustainability, it was extremely important to us to keep in mind that we must respond to the needs of our youth and community as we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of our efforts to respond to the social, emotional and health needs of our members involved and community at-large included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering boxes of produce and healthy foods to families in our organization and the greater community bi-weekly • Hosting a socially-distanced National Voter Registration Day event, but also providing free facemasks and hand sanitizer to the community • Providing wireless hotspots to youth involved in our organization and other youth struggling from not having reliable internet access

III. **IMPACT OF YOUR PROJECT ON THE FOUR BUCKETS OF CIVIC LEARNING:** We took a stab at filling this table out for you, hoping that having something to edit is easier than coming up with content first. However, there is NO pride of authorship so please review the draft language below and make edits directly to the table. We will use your revised version in our future publications.

	How does it increase civic knowledge?	How does it increase civic skills?	How does it increase civic dispositions?	Does it also increase civic capacities?
Definition:	<i>An understanding of government structure, government processes, relevant social studies knowledge and concepts, and American history and political thought in a global context.</i>	<i>Competencies in the use of one's voice, including basic writing, speaking, and listening skills and skills of research, investigation, and critical thinking; competencies in the use of practices</i>	<i>Attitudes important in a democracy, such as a sense of civic duty, sense of efficacy, concern for the welfare of others, and commitment to trustworthiness and bridge-building.</i>	<i>Access to networks, opportunities to participate, and other forms of social capital that promote civic agency.</i>

		<i>of democratic coordination, political institutions, and media literacy.</i>		
Kinston, NC	<p>Fellows participating in summer/fall programming with Kinston Teens/NC Fields learned about and then hosted educational events for the community on voter engagement, the census and the COVID-19 pandemic. They learned about registering or updated the registration of citizens and why that is important. They learned about the differences and similarities between city and county boards, municipal, state and federal government, and how youth can meaningfully participate.</p>	<p>Participants were trained in public speaking and used it when engaging with potential voters as well as the city council and county commission boards. They engaged in critical thinking related to elections and voter engagement/suppression; they learned about the importance of community organizing and were able to experienced paid opportunities to organize and learn both professional and civic skills.</p>	<p>Participating in a program created by two youth led, youth run community-based organizations, our youth experienced the benefits of working with community members and taking concerns and issues of the community directly to the decision-makers. We developed solutions to problems and implemented those solutions directly (LenoirVotes website, COVID-19 responses, trainings/ conversations requested by youth) or lobbied elected officials to respond (local government youth council, making meetings more accessible).</p>	<p>We hosted bi-weekly convenings that included both discussions and trainings on a number of issues, including: public speaking, conflict resolution, health & safety standards, voter engagement, community organizing and social media marketing. We put these trainings into practice through our various efforts (community projects organized, campaigns launched, and speaking/meeting with elected officials).</p> <p>We launched a civic engagement survey to evaluate the civic skills, knowledge and capacity of our organizations' members and are using that data to inform how we move forward.</p>