



REDEFINING POSSIBILITY

P L + U S

*The Fight for Quality Paid Family
and Medical Leave for Everyone*

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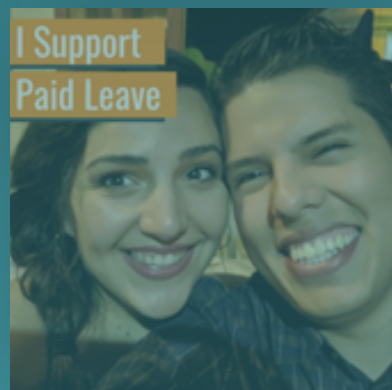
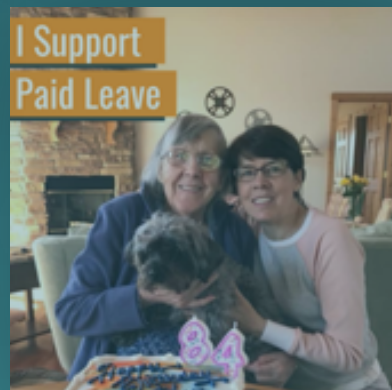
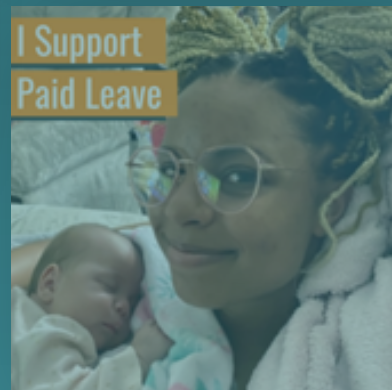
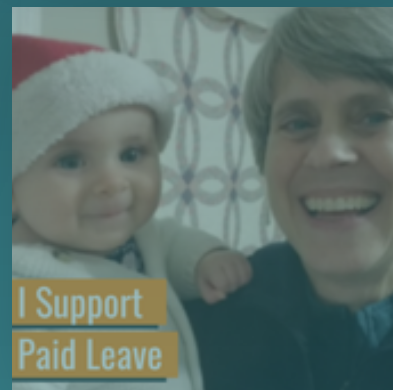
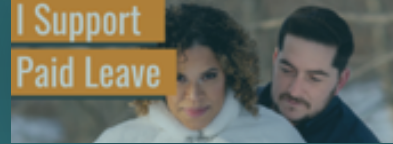
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OUR STORY

A New Playbook: The Founding of PL+US and Early Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Paid leave changes lives. It enables parents to spend time and bond with a new child. It allows family members to care for one another while facing serious illness or at the end of their lives. It helps people across the workforce to take the time they need to grapple with health issues of their own – all without having to sacrifice a job or a paycheck.

Since its launch in 2016, Paid Leave for the United States (PL+US) has pursued an innovative strategy to win high-quality paid family and medical leave for every working person in the U.S.

By centering the stories of individuals and families, PL+US won new or improved access to employer-based paid leave for more than eight million working people at some of the largest employers in the U.S. Through deep, thoughtful work on narrative and advocacy strategy, PL+US helped shape a national conversation on the values and humanity of paid leave and fostered broad-based support for the policy.

This helped advance a shift in the federal landscape: in 2020, the Biden-Harris presidential campaign introduced a commitment to paid leave, and President Biden included a robust paid leave policy in the Build Back Better (BBB) legislative package in 2021. The campaign to pass paid leave as part of BBB allowed PL+US to deploy its unique organizational strengths as a single-issue organization:



PL+US Founder Katie Bethell and Advocate Gigi on Capitol Hill in July 2018

mobilizing private sector actors to advocate for public policy, building political and legislative allies and champions across the political spectrum, and transforming the cultural conversation around the demand, need, and support for paid leave.

The momentum and progress that led to this moment helped take federal paid leave policy further than ever before and positions the movement for an inevitable win in the years to come.

This final report is a look back at PL+US' journey from founding to sunset. It covers principles and strategy, work and lessons learned, key milestones, and a look ahead for paid leave.

THE BEGINNING OF PL+US

PL+US was founded in 2016 as a time-bound, single-issue campaign to win federal paid family and medical leave. Though the United States is only one of three countries in the world without a national paid family and medical leave policy, momentum for paid leave was building in 2016.

A patchwork of states, cities, and employers had begun offering some form of paid leave, but a majority of working people were still excluded depending on where they lived and the jobs they worked. For example, some policies were limited to maternity leave and covered only birthing mothers; other paid leave policies covered only biological and not adoptive parents or left out LGBTQ parents or fathers entirely; some policies covered only full-time salaried working people or those in head offices and excluded retail, hourly, part-time, contract, or other temporary employees. These gaps exposed the limitations of private sector and state-based policies.

Still today in 2022, more than 113 million people are excluded from the United States' existing patchwork of paid leave policies, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. These disparities disproportionately affect certain groups, including low-wage, LGBTQ, and BIPOC working people and underscore the importance of paid leave as a social justice and equity issue.

PL+US founder Katie Bethell saw an opportunity to use strategies and tactics proven by other advocacy movements to build on the momentum and win comprehensive, quality paid leave for everyone in the U.S. Inspired by the quick shift in public opinion that led to winning campaigns for minimum wage, marriage equality, and certain climate and environmental initiatives, PL+US began with a seed investment from Bethell and a private foundation in 2016.

Bethell believed that redefining the possibility for paid leave would require focus and leadership across four key areas:

1. Corporate Engagement

Existing advocates had not prioritized the private sector as a venue for change. Corporate campaigning could create momentum by building a narrative of demand. By increasing uptake and use of paid leave, the campaign could build an engaged group of supporters and businesses who could become advocates and allies for federal policy.

2. Advocacy and Storytelling

With lessons of other advocacy efforts in mind, PL+US needed to reframe the problem to reflect modern public opinion and drive culture change by engaging authentic, diverse, and unexpected individual storytellers. These powerful individual storytellers paired with the megaphones of celebrities and influencers could reframe the national narrative and build greater public understanding and support of paid leave.

3. Politics and Policy

Changing federal policy would require demonstrating the political salience of paid leave. It would be necessary to center paid leave in elections, mobilize constituents to show support for the issue in a localized way, and build greater champions on Capitol Hill by creating a political through-line from campaign to office. It was also critical to open the Overton Window on the existing policy on Capitol Hill (the FAMILY Act) and articulate the scope of a more ambitious and progressive vision for what could be possible, transforming what was broadly viewed as the policy floor.

4. Org Structure and Culture

To win this fight with principles and authenticity, PL+US needed to model best practices on work-life balance, self-care, and caregiving for its own staff. Showing leadership in this way would allow PL+US to build credibility with partners and businesses in the private sector and authentically speak to policymakers on the benefits of paid leave.



PL+US Advocates and their families, 2018-2021

This perspective shaped a broader theory of change: to win federal policy, the paid leave movement would need to be successful in building power across the narrative, business, legislative, political, and grassroots pillars, and PL+US could be a complementary force to existing groups by authentically building power across each of these.

To support this vision, PL+US structured the campaign with key attributes:

Single-issue

PL+US was founded as a single-issue campaign. While other movement advocates largely worked to advance agendas that included multiple important family and care policies – including early education, gender equity, or affordable childcare – PL+US’ focus gave its advocacy a unique resonance and served as an evergreen shortcut to internal alignment. The single-issue focus allowed the campaign to hire differently, seek funding differently, work with partners differently, and ultimately advocate differently.

Time-bound

PL+US was created as a campaign, not an organization. The time horizon created a sense of urgency across the team. Because it was not focused on institution-building or sustainability, the campaign was able to maintain a focus on results. Taking cues from political campaigns, PL+US offered a rich and rewarding employment experience without promising a career worth of work.

Small and agile

PL+US was a small and mighty entity throughout, which gave the campaign space to pivot and make quick adjustments as political and other conditions changed. The campaign was poised to spot opportunity and take advantage of every moment, whether planned or unplanned.

Willingness to be bold and innovative

Inspired by work done by other advocacy movements and coming to the fight with fresh energy, PL+US was eager to be bold and try new approaches to complement existing movement actors, even when this meant being disruptive. This orientation allowed the campaign to think bigger, more creatively, and with more ambition than another similarly-sized entity might have.

Focused – not just on the issue, but on the win

Bethell and several key early advisors came to PL+US from the world of campaigns and brought with them an appetite not just to work, but to win. They also maintained an understanding of where they were in the campaign and what tactics would be required at each stage. This focus on the end goal influenced the campaign’s strategic decisions throughout.

With a clear theory of change and a vision for its organizational identity, PL+US began its work.



OUR APPROACH

The Work and the Lessons Learned



THE PL+US APPROACH

From its start in 2016, PL+US pushed for change with a set of hypotheses or operating assumptions in mind. Many of these challenged the working assumptions and approach in the movement for paid leave by:

- + Redefining the playbook to prioritize employer policy change
- + Expanding the popular narrative
- + Reconciling the policy framework and engaging bipartisan political actors
- + Reconceptualizing the people practices of a time bound campaign

The work of PL+US served to test these hypotheses and, while many proved to be true, the campaign learned lessons on every front along the way.

 CORPORATE
ENGAGEMENT

 ADVOCACY &
STORYTELLING

 POLITICS
AND POLICY

 ORG STRUCTURE
AND CULTURE



CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT

One path to winning paid leave for more working people in the U.S. was through employer policy change. PL+US worked from both inside and outside to push large companies to introduce or expand paid leave policies. Through this work and the change it prompted, more than 8 million people gained new or expanded access to paid leave. This also fostered a national narrative around the business and economic case for paid leave, which would be critical in the public policy debate to come.

THE BUSINESS CASE

With existing advocates focused largely on public sector transformation across the federal, state, and local level, the private sector was a largely untapped source of power for paid leave. PL+US saw an opportunity to push companies to respond to growing public demand for paid leave and provide an opportunity for companies to showcase their leadership on building equitable and supportive workplaces. PL+US approached its work with an early focus on the corporate sector for four key strategic reasons:

A series of companies changing their paid leave policies could provide a drumbeat to build momentum.

Employers responding to internal and external pressure to establish or expand paid leave policies could be an opportunity for media coverage and increased public awareness of the issue. Even unsuccessful corporate campaigns weren't losses – they were just campaigns that hadn't been won yet and potential catalysts for comprehensive federal policy.

Corporate policy change would translate to real-life impact for millions of people.

By targeting some of the largest employers in the U.S., PL+US could expand access to paid leave for thousands of working people through a single corporate campaign.

Corporate policy change fostered a critical narrative of equity that would be foundational in the public policy debate.

Making corporate policies more equitable emulated the PL+US core values and the principles the paid leave movement wanted to see reflected in federal policy. Generating media coverage about why companies shouldn't leave out their lowest-wage employees set up the media conversation about what an inclusive national policy should look like, priming the public and policymakers alike.

Companies with new or improved policies could potentially become advocates for a federal policy solution, helping to neutralize the power of business opposition.

Good actors would likely be eager to be recognized for their high-road approach and could be engaged as voices of support for policy change – perhaps in part because policy could level the playing field and help reduce the cost or burden of providing the benefit internally.

1

WHAT WE THOUGHT

Corporate engagement can create pressure for paid leave policy; public policy is downstream of culture.

WHAT WE DID

- Pushed for large-employer policy change through an inside-outside approach.
- Supported and provided tools to employees for policy change at businesses both small and large.
- Prioritized employers with large numbers of employees to drive significant immediate change and create the potential for culture change.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- Changing corporate policies helped change the culture around paid leave and created the space for a broader conversation on changing federal policy.
- Change at a handful of industry leaders created a new standard and prompted change throughout the sector.
- Small business voices were especially persuasive in advocacy efforts with their elected officials.

2

WHAT WE THOUGHT

An organization like PL+US can be effective at holding companies accountable & cultivating good actors.

WHAT WE DID

- Surveyed top U.S. employers to publish reports annually from 2016-2019 detailing known paid leave policies at U.S. based companies.
- Launched campaigns from the outside to promote corporate change. PL+US was active in all venues, including shareholder activism and litigation.
- Engaged internal decisionmakers at companies through workshops and advisory sessions to improve workplace policy.
- Effectively partnered with corporate brands like Unilever Dove Men+Care and Rent the Runway to uplift private sector leaders and allies.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- Reaching out to companies for their internal policies was the essential first step in building a relationship for future engagement.
- Paid partnerships took a long time to establish and distracted from immediate high-impact opportunistic work.
- Carrot and stick work provided unique value at different stages of the campaign. Corporate accountability work was critical early on to generate visibility and momentum; whereas cultivation of businesses as allies was critical for the BBB campaign.

3

WHAT WE THOUGHT

Working people can be engaged effectively to become Advocates for both employer policy and public policy change.

WHAT WE DID

- Partnered with worker Advocates, such as OUR Walmart, which evolved to become United For Respect, to listen to what employees wanted and identify Advocates and leaders for internal work.
- Coordinated Advocate testimonials at shareholder meetings and provided a megaphone for Advocate storytelling.
- Trained and provided materials to head office staff to advocate for paid leave at dozens of companies.
- Centered essential working people and the need for paid family and medical leave through accountability campaigns during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- Running campaigns with retail and frontline working people helped shift paid leave from an elite perk to an essential benefit that everybody deserves.
- Specific, individual stories of hardship created a reputation challenge for holdout companies and prompted policy change.
- The equity and inclusion frame of paid leave for all working people gave companies an important and urgent reason to make change.
- Building a narrative around essential workers was instrumental in passing the CARES act which provided emergency paid leave during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4

WHAT WE THOUGHT

Good business actors, both large and small organizations, can be powerful Advocates for paid leave policy.

WHAT WE DID

- Recruited 350+ companies to sign a letter to Congress supporting paid leave and developed a sign-on letter from diverse business voices for Senate Leadership.
- Coordinated meetings between 38 businesses and key members of Congress, including House Speaker Pelosi and activated businesses to send behind the scenes emails and calls to key congressional decision makers.
- Provided tools for supportive companies to engage both employees and customer communities on federal paid leave policy.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- A single-issue campaign is easier for a company to engage with than a multi-issue agenda.
- A tactic like a sign-on letter that is low-bar advocacy and press-friendly can mark the beginning of an effective corporate engagement strategy.
- Executive voices of support are critical for high-profile storytelling.
- Companies have an appetite for low-bar advocacy tools for their employee and/or consumer base. PL+US met this interest by making it easy for companies to share simple advocacy actions.

CASE STUDY:

WALMART & STARBUCKS

2018 was a major turning point for paid leave: many large employers implemented or expanded paid leave for their workforces. In particular, PL+US, together with key partners, drove policy change at two major US employers – Walmart and Starbucks – helping set off a chain reaction and a new norm that both allowed other companies to follow and be publicly rewarded for doing so.

PL+US saw these employers as strategic linchpins in the push for federal policy because they shifted expectations about who deserves paid leave and what is possible from a policy standpoint. Winning campaigns for sizable low-wage, retail/service sector workforces highlighted that it was not enough for large businesses to only extend paid leave to the C-suite and exclude large swaths of their employees. By extension, it laid the groundwork for inclusion of low-wage working people in any federal policy.

As a result of these two corporate advocacy campaigns more than 700,000 working people gained new or expanded access to paid leave.

It was individual working people – whom PL+US calls “Advocates” – who made this change happen. For the Walmart campaign, PL+US collaborated with OUR Walmart, which evolved to become United



PL+US Advocates delivering a petition to the Walmart Home Office demanding equal paid parental leave for all employees on June 1, 2017

for Respect and is the leading organization advocating for Walmart employees. PL+US provided external affairs and campaign kindling to an already growing effort by supporting the OUR Walmart associates with media coverage, materials, and petitions to push for change. This support was critical in contributing to a pivotal campaign moment: Walmart associates speaking at the Walmart shareholder meeting and publicly calling for paid leave for hourly employees in front of thousands of attendees.

The Starbucks campaign took a different approach. In 2017, Starbucks announced a new paid leave policy which was widely celebrated and praised by the media. However, when PL+US looked at the specifics of the policy, it noticed that the new policy only applied to salaried workers in the corporate headquarters and excluded 160,000+ baristas – the heart and soul of Starbucks’ retail footprint.

This discrepancy and inequity inspired PL+US to launch a corporate accountability campaign, engaging organizational partners Cworker and Working Washington and recruiting baristas to share their personal stories and call for Starbucks to expand paid leave to the full workforce. Baristas made the case for paid leave on equity grounds: that lower-wage workers should have the same benefits as salaried corporate staff and that paid leave should be available to all parenting adults regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

Across both efforts, PL+US worked with allies and Advocates on the inside to press for a new policy, while also building external pressure on the employers through a combination of earned media, social media, and public shareholder activism.

In the case of Starbucks, PL+US worked with Zevin Asset Management to file a shareholder resolution calling on Starbucks to change their policy for equity purposes and supported a Starbucks barista with a new baby to travel from Ohio to Seattle for the annual shareholder meeting where she bravely confronted Starbucks’ CEO to ask why baristas like her were left out.



PL+US Advocate delivering Starbucks petition on March 21, 2017

PL+US also organized a press conference outside of Starbucks’ headquarters where baristas delivered over 30,000 petition signatures and met directly with Starbucks’ corporate HR leaders.

This 360 degree approach made a big impact: Walmart extended paid leave to all full-time retail associates, and Starbucks extended equal policy to all full-time baristas.

Though these were huge steps forward, there is still work to be done to expand corporate paid leave policies and build more inclusive and comprehensive coverage for all working people.



ADVOCACY & STORYTELLING

PL+US used advocacy and storytelling to shift public understanding about paid leave. In particular, lifting up real people with authentic stories about the value of paid leave was central to PL+US' work and success.



BUILDING A NATIONAL NARRATIVE FOR PAID LEAVE

PAID LEAVE | MAY 17, 2017
New Study Says Only 6 Percent of Low-Wage Workers Have Access to Paid Leave
By Claire Landrum

— THE CUT

Over 200 businesses urge congressional leaders on federal paid family leave program

Biden has signaled a willingness to revamp benefits

By MaryAlice Park

— abc NEWS

Everything You Need to Know About Paid Family Leave

— marie claire

Business

Pandemic Drives Business Support for Paid Leave, Study Finds

The U.S. is alone among developed nations without a national policy guaranteeing time off.

— Bloomberg

Meet the Activists Leading the Fight for Paid Family Leave

An unlikely coalition of investors, blue-collar workers and labor organizers is scoring some big wins.

BY VALENTINA ZARNA
April 20, 2018 3:30 AM PDT



— FORTUNE

Hollywood Women Push Directors Guild for Better Parental Benefits

Taking leave can result in lost coverage, as one female director discovered after giving birth. She's enlisted Amy Schumer, Amy Poehler and others in her effort to get the rules revised.

— The New York Times

Why Walmart Expanded Parental Leave — and How to Convince Your Company to Do the Same

by Sarah Green Carmichael

— Harvard Business Review

03-23-21

Spotify, Etsy, Goop, Patagonia, and others say Congress should pass national paid family leave

Close to 700 companies have signed a letter asking Congress to create permanent paid family and medical leave.

— FAST@COMPANY

Biden pushes for 12-weeks of paid family leave in presidential first

— THE HILL

Paid Family Leave Has Stalled in Congress for Years. Here's Why That's Changing

— TIME

OPINION

We Each Run a Small Business. Here's Why Paid Leave is a Good Idea | Opinion

— Newsweek

Business

The Parental Leave Boomlet in the U.S. Is Leaving Women Behind

Big companies in industries where women make up the bulk of the workforce are less likely to offer paid time off to new parents.

— Bloomberg

1

WHAT WE THOUGHT

A corporate advocacy focus on lagging companies can build wins and generate national press to add momentum to the federal fight.

WHAT WE DID

- Initially focused on bad actors as an organizing model to illustrate the need for policy; petitions, organizing, shareholder activism, and litigation all helped build a grassroots movement with highly engaged supporters.
- Opened up a national conversation on good vs. bad policy by educating journalists about components of strong paid leave employer policies; helped media ask thoughtful questions about whether policies were inclusive.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- Early media education ensured that stories about employer policy change were thoughtful and nuanced and recognized both strengths and limitations of policies when announced.
- A multi-year drumbeat of earned media on corporate policy change contributed to the growing sense of inevitability for federal paid leave policy.
- It is possible to effectively engage a general audience to care about a bad actor even if it is not their company, especially if it is a recognizable brand with customer affinity.

2

WHAT WE THOUGHT

The activation of new or unexpected voices on this issue can broaden and deepen the conversation and drive understanding.

WHAT WE DID

- Ran a campaign with bipartisan moms calling for paid leave in the 2016 election.
- Engaged dads in storytelling through corporate partners, such as Dove Men+Care, which supported a dads fly-in to DC, made grants to fathers without paternity leave, and created a national storytelling platform.
- Mobilized high-profile and celebrity dads, including Alexis Ohanian, Tan France, and Secretary Pete Buttigieg, who were willing to share their experience and chart the course of cultural modeling.
- Published report: “LEFT OUT: How corporate America’s parental leave policies discriminate against dads, LGBTQ+, and adoptive parents.”

WHAT WE LEARNED

- The “odd-bedfellows” collaboration of bipartisan moms made a big impact in the polarized Washington environment.
- While the focus on dads helped to broaden the lens from maternity leave to parental leave, it also highlighted how much the U.S. still has to discuss about gender roles.
- Some high-profile parental leave Advocates were subject to a backlash, but even that ultimately brought attention to the legislative fight and created political pressure.
- Dads featured in advertising and paid media campaigns were effective messengers in courting new supporters.

3

WHAT WE THOUGHT

Centering the voices and stories of Advocates paired with relevant data builds humanity and support for paid leave.

WHAT WE DID

- Empowered Advocates to lead the charge with employers as individual changemakers.
- Partnered with labor organizations with huge megaphones, such as Fight for \$15, United for Respect, SEIU, and Ultraviolet, to build loud and effective campaigns.
- Focused on storytelling around different use cases of paid leave and established these as identities that could be used in advocacy.
- Connected personal stories with political decisionmakers in events, roundtables, town halls, and earned media to build localized support.
- Used lessons from polling and message testing to build powerful paid media campaigns across digital, radio, TV, and broadcast platforms.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- PL+US' communications efforts that centered human storytellers and the universality of paid leave generated the most high-profile and impactful earned media coverage.
- Building earned, social, and paid media campaigns informed by message and messenger testing and focus groups yields higher engagement and should be a foundational tool for the movement going forward.
- The diversity of Advocate voices allowed PL+US to demonstrate the universal need for paid leave policy and strengthened advocacy across political constituencies.

4

WHAT WE THOUGHT

Grassroots and grasstops organizing can be mutually beneficial and reinforce one another, creating the condition for a legislative win.

WHAT WE DID

- Engaged half a million Advocates and supporters around the country on the campaign email list and partner petition sites.
- Proactively engaged business leaders, celebrities, and influencers for high-profile media interviews, paid media, and advocacy.
- Partnered with companies to reach out to parent-focused brands' customer communities.
- Educated and engaged media elite and influencers through stakeholder briefings and 1:1 deskside briefings.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- Building an engaged supporter following across organizing platforms allowed PL+US to meet supporters with the type of engagement they preferred and build an engaged grassroots base.
- Advocacy organizations can be more intentional about investing in cultivating grassroots supporters beyond the coasts in order to build a more diversified base of political support.
- It is effective to activate brands with like audiences and an overlapping consumer base, like brands Hello Bello and Babylist.
- It was challenging to engage celebrities and influencers for one-off campaign moments. A more sustained program is needed to more effectively activate VIP voices.

CASE STUDY:

A NEW NORMAL PSA

Ahead of the 2020 election, PL+US saw an opportunity to build on polling and message testing to appeal to voters with pathos by showcasing the moments in which a working person or a family may use paid leave – whether parental, caregiving, or personal medical leave.

By highlighting the humanity and universality of paid leave, especially after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, PL+US could deepen policy support and position paid leave as a salient issue in the upcoming election.

Informed by the success of centering powerful, individual stories through the corporate engagement efforts earlier in the campaign, PL+US did extensive work to identify individual stories that would move hearts and minds from a values standpoint and built a national TV and digital campaign, A New Normal.

A New Normal stood out for a few reasons: it highlighted compelling, diverse storytellers that were impossible to ignore, and it did so with high production value.



Mai Ton, A New Normal, 2020

The effort featured five individual stories that represented a range of lived experiences:

Amanda, a mother and caregiver in New York who had to leave a job because it did not offer leave that she needed to care for her dying child; Jon, a father and husband in Ohio who experienced the benefits of parental leave with one child but did not have it when his second was born; YaKima, a mother and caregiver in North Carolina who was forced to choose between her salary and her mother with an acute illness; Mai, a mother and caregiver in New York who deeply valued her access to paid leave when her child was born and her father passed away at the same moment in her life; and Leah, a mother in New York who was unable to take the leave she needed after having a life threatening car accident.



YaKima Rhinehart (top) and Amanda Monteiro (bottom), *A New Normal*, 2020

In choosing where and how to place the ads, PL+US looked at its three political priority markets: Arizona, Iowa, and North Carolina. The campaign tested all five stories in each market and then ran the one story in each market that viewers had rated most effective. The five videos were viewed hundreds of thousands of times, with more than 25,000 views in the first 24 hours.

Of the five videos, Amanda’s story reached the largest audience with the most impressions and highest view rate across the board, demonstrating the effectiveness of a humanity and values-based approach.

In addition to the paid media impressions the campaign generated earned media, including a high-profile Forbes article, “Paid Family And Medical Leave Should Be The ‘New Normal,’” garnering visibility on a national level as well as the priority political markets.

The campaign was awarded Top Public Affairs Campaign and received honorable mention in the video storytelling and digital marketing categories of the PRNews Nonprofit Awards.

Given the success of the ads, the campaign was relaunched three different times for paid media pushes on TV and digital platforms in Washington, D.C. and the Beltway during the Build Back Better legislative effort.

As a result of the campaign, grassroots audiences in key states were primed to understand paid leave, and grassroots leaders in the Beltway experienced a “surround sound” advocacy moment underscoring the issue’s salience.



POLITICS AND POLICY

Winning paid leave would require deep investment in political organizing, building new legislative champions, and advancing a policy that satisfied core principles of equity, inclusion and universality.

Dove
MEN

PAID LEAVE ON THE HILL



Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and supporters, Fall 2021, #SavePaidLeave rally

As a single-issue organization outside of the traditional paid leave coalition, PL+US differentiated itself by leaning into political advocacy, paid media, and a non-traditional legislative approach. PL+US had a clear view: to effectively advance federal policy, it needed to build a powerful constituency.

1

WHAT WE THOUGHT

An organization outside of the traditional coalition has the ability to explore and introduce policy solutions that open the Overton Window.

WHAT WE DID

- Critically analyzed years of existing polling that showed the public supported a federal paid leave policy that was greater than 12 weeks of leave.
- Partnered with the Georgetown Law School Center on Poverty and Inequality to release “A New Approach to Paid Family and Medical Leave: What Doctors and Experts Tell Us About Designing a Paid Family & Medical Leave Program that Works for All.”
- Leveraged the findings of The Georgetown Report to develop a paid leave legislative proposal in collaboration with former Rep. Cedric Richmond (LA-02), opening up a conversation around a more expansive policy than the FAMILY Act.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- The ceiling can be redefined to be the floor; a 12-week leave policy could be repositioned to be the minimum acceptable plan, rather than the maximum possible.
- Working with an established respected third party like the Georgetown Law School Center provided credibility for PL+US’ policy work.
- The release of the report created an advocacy and organizing moment, provided evidence-based data to cite, and was foundational to the campaign’s policy stance. It also became part of the platform of multiple Democratic 2020 Presidential candidates including Vice President Kamala Harris.

2

WHAT WE THOUGHT

Paid leave needed more than popular support; it needed a constituency that spoke to its diverse usage and touchpoints.

WHAT WE DID

- With a differentiated policy vision, PL+US engaged a new group of champions, including dads, low-wage working people, corporate CEOs, small business owners, and more.
- Once engaged, this constituency was successfully animated through campaigns across social, earned, and paid media during the pandemic and in Fall 2021.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- A constituency for this issue – impacted people who would write letters and call offices – was able to build the political salience of the issue for candidates and elected officials.
- Building a stronger constituency in politically valuable states and battleground districts will be critical for the success of the movement going forward.

3

WHAT WE THOUGHT

The movement needed an actor willing to be political.

WHAT WE DID

- Created and secured funding for a 501(c)(4), PL+US Action.
- Initiated and coordinated with Paid Family Leave PAC.
- Hired professional lobbyists to gather high-quality intelligence and influence members of Congress.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- There was limited c4 capacity in the movement and PL+US was one of the few organizations piloting political and electoral work. An effective political program requires both candidate and voter engagement that is well resourced.
- There were limited resources for c4 work dedicated to paid leave explicitly and greater interest in supporting broader care platforms.
- Having a c4 for unrestricted lobbying with a focus on investing in lobbyists with strategic committee and leadership relationships was hugely helpful.
- The affiliated Paid Family Leave PAC created powerful opportunities to engage with senators, traditionally limited to corporate and special interest lobbyists.

4

WHAT WE THOUGHT

Endorsements can help elevate the issue of paid leave for voters and advance culture shift.

WHAT WE DID

- PL+US Action endorsed candidates who supported paid leave in the 2018 and 2020 elections.
- Engaged directly with candidates through non-partisan education to increase paid leave mentions in platforms.
- Released Presidential scorecard detailing candidates' stances on paid leave in the 2018 midterms and 2020 primary and general elections.
- Deeply engaged the Biden-Harris campaign through multiple touch points centering the issue of paid leave within their broader platform and leveraging the urgency of the COVID-19 crisis.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- Targeted political investment can raise issue profile: following engagement with campaigns, PL+US saw a 74% increase in candidates supporting paid leave in their platforms.
- Additional voter education is required to ensure a comprehensive understanding of paid leave.
- The endorsement program provided a proof point of what a successful political program could look like with greater investment and resourcing.

5

WHAT WE THOUGHT

There could be common ground on some bipartisan elements of paid leave policy.

WHAT WE DID

- Conducted opinion polling in key states, demonstrating policy support across the political spectrum.
- Engaged directly with select Republicans, e.g., Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA), Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH), and the Trump White House.
- First endorsement program (2018) was bipartisan.
- Met with the Trump White House and engaged with Ivanka Trump who championed the Federal Employee Paid Leave Act (FEPLA), providing paid leave to federal employees.
- Engaged moderate Senate Democrats leading up to the Build Back Better legislative push in 2021.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- PL+US' single-issue focus made bipartisan engagement possible and fostered collaboration with moderate actors like the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC); this built greater credibility to engage the private sector.
- Engaging with non-traditional political blocs on a historically progressive Democratic issue fostered issue understanding for a broader set of members.
- While Republicans were not vocal advocates for paid leave, they also showed less staunch opposition during BBB.
- While general support for paid leave spans the political spectrum, Republican and bipartisan proposals to date have reflected that there are significant gaps in how advocates define high-quality policy.

CASE STUDY: **GEORGETOWN REPORT**

As PL+US engaged in the federal policymaking conversation, existing policy advocates had advanced a proposal for 12 weeks of paid leave, the FAMILY Act, which had been introduced in five consecutive sessions of Congress by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY). Despite growing co-sponsorship and broad based support, the FAMILY Act was stalled and not close to near-term legislative passage. But the external landscape had changed with an increasing number of private sector actors implementing inclusive paid leave policies and a narrative awakening around the right to paid leave.

PL+US believed this private sector momentum had shifted public expectation on what constituted ambitious paid leave for everyone and could have ripple effects in the legislative sphere. The campaign believed it needed to open the “Overton Window” for paid leave, expanding the range of legislative acceptability and therefore possibility.

PL+US partnered with the Georgetown University Law School Center on Poverty and Inequality, which had deep and credible expertise on social policy, to publish and disseminate an evidence-based report calling for a more expansive policy proposal.



“The Paid Family & Medical Leave Opportunity: What Research Tells Us About Designing a Paid Leave Program that Works for All”, 2019

Key report findings included:

- + Evidence shows that families need up to six months of paid leave.
- + A policy should be flexible for unique caregiving and medical needs.
- + A social insurance model, as implemented successfully by several states, provides the optimal structure.
- + Paid leave must include parental, caregiving, and medical leave. It must also include all working people – including those working in the gig economy.
- + There must be job protections and anti-retaliation policies for all individuals who take leave.
- + A policy should provide full wage replacement for the lowest-paid working people.

PL+US prepared a significant external communications effort to launch the report and worked with dozens of Advocates in politically valuable states and districts to hand-deliver copies of this report to their elected representatives.

Through its 501(c)(4) PL+US Action, PL+US also worked with 2020 Democratic Presidential Primary contenders to seek adoption of this policy into their platforms; then-Senator Kamala Harris included the full breadth of the recommended policy in her platform, and every other Democratic candidate included components of the Georgetown report’s proposal into their platforms. PL+US Action was instrumental in building a “race to the top” for high-quality paid leave platforms for presidential candidates in the Democratic primary, demonstrating what might be possible in the general election and future cycles.

The report was essential to the evolution of PL+US and contributed to the national narrative on defining high-quality policy. The report gave PL+US medical and economic data to cite and pair with stories for powerful communications and crystallized the campaign’s policy north star. The report formed the baseline for what would become a legislative proposal framing the most ambitious paid leave policy to date.

At the same time, the report and related legislative proposal caused friction within the movement for paid leave. The strategy to introduce a progressive policy that was more expansive than the FAMILY Act, while at the same time engaging moderates and

Republicans, seemed contradictory. The introduction of a new policy proposal also meant that not all paid leave advocates were not coalescing around a single legislative vehicle, introducing the potential to fracture the movement’s power. The report and other factors within the broader landscape contributed to a recalibration by the movement, both on policy specifics as well as how the movement was coordinating amongst organizations to advocate for federal policy.

As PL+US continued to promote the findings of the Georgetown Report and build momentum for the related legislative proposal, the movement introduced a new, single-issue advocacy entity, Paid Leave for All, to help ensure alignment and prioritization of paid leave. Paid Leave for All was an essential addition to the advocacy landscape.



Founder Katie Bethell speaks with Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff during PL+US’ Conversation on Care in October 2020



ORG STRUCTURE AND CULTURE

PL+US walked the walk with flexible hours, unlimited leave, and other care-first policies that were relatively unique in the nonprofit and advocacy landscape. This gave the campaign greater credibility in its work and drove productivity and loyalty within the team.

WORDS FROM THE TEAM

“PL+US allocated real resources in building workplace relationships, wellness, work/life balance, and professional development which made me feel good about working here. This is a team that cared for one another!”

-BRIDGET

“From the beginning at PL+US, there was a commitment to being a compassionate workplace where everyone cares for each other as humans. I took paid leave twice during my 5 years at PL+US: 7 months for my daughter’s birth and 5 months when my husband had cancer during the pandemic. People ask me how it’s possible for our small team to get so much done. I feel totally supported in doing what I need to do both at home and at work, and this makes me so much more productive.”

-ORLI

“[I appreciated] the remote-first workplace, the encouragement to bring your whole self to the work, and that PL+US lived its values towards paid leave and flexible work culture.”

-TAMIRRA

“Knowing that I had the support of my employer to make a schedule that worked for my health, my family, and my overall well-being most definitely made me a better and more productive worker on the job.”

-KATE

“PL+US’ flexible schedule allowed me to spend time with my nephew and take time off to process my friend’s passing. I am a better employee and person because of it.”

-MARY

“When I was both emotionally and mentally affected by all of the killings of black men and women by white people, I quite literally could NOT work and needed to protest, cry, and hug my kids as much as I needed to, and PL+US allowed me to do that!”

-ALIYA

1

WHAT WE THOUGHT

A single-issue, time-bound campaign can be a great place to work.

WHAT WE DID

- Centered caregiving and self-care; offered all staff flexible schedules and unlimited PTO, including leave for all kinds of caregiving. Leadership team consciously led by prioritizing work-life balance and taking their own leave.
- Provided \$1,000 annual professional development, \$300 annual home office, and \$150 monthly self-care budgets. Allotted flexible budget for in-person fun and retreats.
- Made investments in racial justice work through Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) groups, internal culture, and hiring policies.
- Supported staff through the sunset by providing 3 months' severance, health insurance stipend, and professional development funds.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- It is important to walk the walk. PL+US could not ask employers or policymakers for a policy that it did not practice itself.
- Deep JEDI work requires time and focus, which were hard to maintain during the final phase of the legislative sprint.
- Leadership must invest in intentional and consistent communication to the team to effectively execute on strategic pivots.
- Team transparency in benefit usage and PTO tracking was a helpful tool for encouraging team members to utilize benefits and leave.
- Investing in the staff paid dividends and meant that PL+US retained the team through the end of its sunset year.

2

WHAT WE THOUGHT

Investing in the team makes PL+US stronger and supports campaigns and movements long term.

WHAT WE DID

- Always recognized our team members as the campaign's greatest asset.
- Operated with the belief that high-potential mission-driven people will get the work done, regardless of their work schedule.
- Invested in staff development outside of campaign needs.
- From its founding, PL+US offered a remote work environment, making investments in technology solutions and regular in-person touch points to ensure effective communication and community.

WHAT WE LEARNED

- Annual survey results and consistent anecdotal feedback from staff showed that they did their best work knowing that they could take the time they needed for themselves and others they cared for.
- Campaigns like PL+US with a breakneck pace and moments of strategic pivot can have high rates of turnover.
- Staff reported being stronger professionals with an expanded skill set and leadership skills from their tenure at PL+US.
- PL+US' remote work environment enabled it to hire the best talent, regardless of location. It also meant that the PL+US team was well prepared to work remotely with the onset of the pandemic.

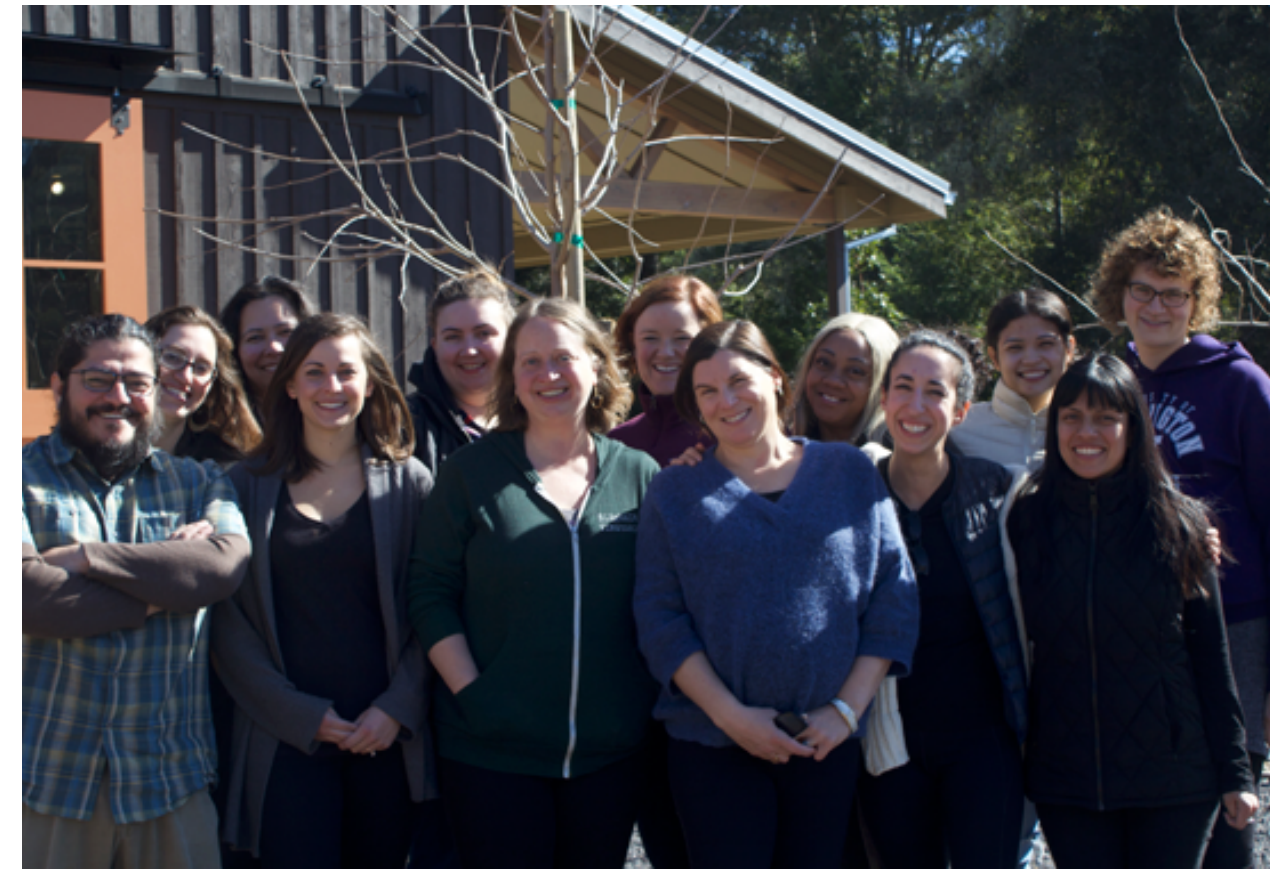
CASE STUDY:

DECISION TO SUNSET

At the time of its founding, PL+US committed to win paid leave for every working person by 2022. The short time horizon had real benefits. It created helpful urgency throughout the work. It enabled the campaign to credibly approach partners, especially corporate partners, with a legitimate and authentic desire to be obsolete in just a few short years rather than build a long-standing institution. It also empowered the campaign to act boldly and be a disruptor in a way that a legacy entity with multiple priorities might not.

At the same time, the short timeline also brought challenges: it was hard to plan for individual career growth within the campaign, the whole campaign felt like a sprint and led to some burnout, and the close horizon shortchanged the campaign's JEDI work. And of course, there was no control over the legislative time horizon and no guarantee that five years would be enough time to pass a national comprehensive paid leave policy.

In early 2021, PL+US faced a series of decision points: a founder transition, an uncertain legislative timeline, and a shrinking pool of resources given shifts in funder appetite. The advocacy funding landscape was increasingly interested in allocating dollars to constituency-based, multi-issue organizations focused on “care priorities” more broadly (e.g., affordable childcare, homecare, and



PL+US team retreat, Fall 2017

the child tax credit). While this benefitted organizations with larger care portfolios, it left PL+US as a single issue entity with a dwindling runway.

As the organization grappled with these issues, the moment of political opportunity emerged as Democrats won a pair of Senate runoff elections in Georgia, and President Biden – with his party in control of the House and the tie-breaking vote in the Senate – outlined his domestic policy framework, which included paid leave. With a Democratic trifecta in Washington, D.C. and long-time paid leave allies in key transition (and soon to be administration) roles, the landscape had never been more favorable for the passage of paid leave. Against this political backdrop, the U.S. was entering

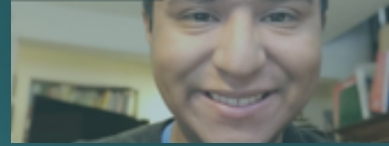
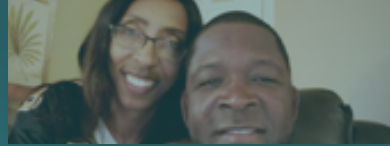
the second year of a global pandemic, and the nation's need for investment in its care infrastructure, including paid leave, childcare, and caregiving support, had never been more immediate or clear. PL+US also understood that the window was small: the first year of an administration is the ideal time to move big legislative rocks, and the 2022 midterms had the potential to keep this kind of opportunity from emerging again in the near future.

Given these conditions, PL+US made the strategic decision to pull forward its 2022 resources and dedicate everything to a paid leave victory in 2021. With its combined budget across 2021 and 2022, a devoted and energized team and board, and a favorable political and legislative landscape, PL+US was well-positioned to drive a policy win in 2021, while also upholding the campaign's commitment to sunset in 2022.

The priorities for the sunset were clear: 1) win, 2) take care of the PL+US team, and 3) capture what the organization learned. With a stretching legislative timeline and no clarity on outcome in Q3 and Q4, the campaign had to tackle those priorities out of order. While simultaneously continuing to push forward as hard as possible towards a legislative victory, PL+US proceeded with its sunset plan. The campaign made good on its promise to take care of the team, put a transparent plan in place, and guaranteed team members transition resources with a generous severance and offboarding plan at year-end. This ensured campaign staff could think about their next career moves out in the open and did so with the support of their managers, leadership, Board Members, and

Advisors. Staff also took time to reflect on and celebrate what they had accomplished, both personally and together as a campaign, even in the face of an ongoing legislative fight with an uncertain outcome. Simultaneously, the campaign conducted a series of interviews and sought to catalog its learnings – captured in this report – while also liaising with movement peers to constructively and collaboratively work on paving the way for the next chapter of the fight for paid leave.

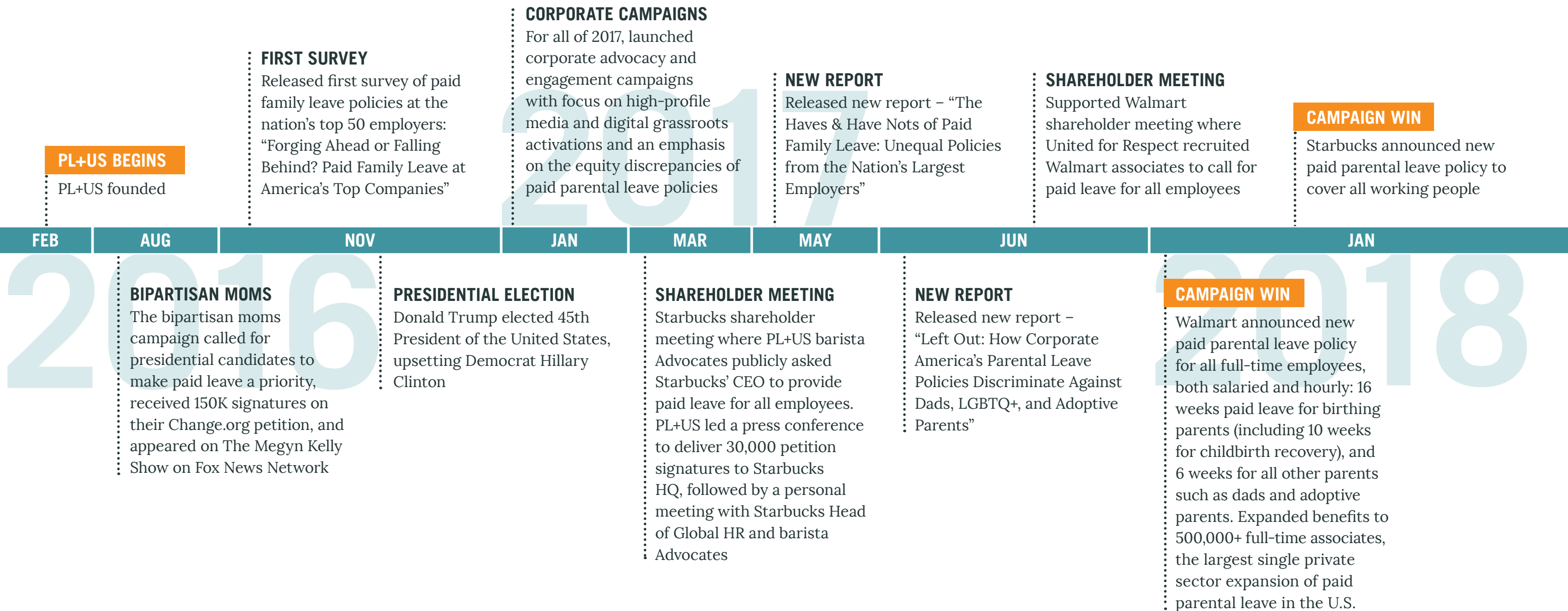
In this way, PL+US sunset in the same way it did everything else: staying agile, approaching change with care and compassion, and honoring its people.



OUR JOURNEY

Key Moments and Milestones

PL+US AND PAID LEAVE MILESTONES 2016-2021



CANDIDATE EDUCATION

Ahead of the midterm elections, PL+US analyzed 300 candidates' platforms and conducted candidate education activities such as developing and distributing policy briefs and 1:1 briefings. In February 2018, only 16% had included paid leave in their platforms, but by September 2018, more candidates adopted paid leave into their platforms (an increase of 74% from the February baseline)

DEMS CONTROL HOUSE

Democrats took back the House in midterm elections; Nancy Pelosi set to become next Speaker of the House of Representatives

CAMPAIGN WIN

Target expanded paid leave policy for 360,000 working people, including part-time employees, following PL+US' campaign

DADS DAY OF ACTION

PL+US partnered with Unilever brand Dove Men+Care to host the first-ever Dads Day of Action for paid leave on Capitol Hill. Dads from around the country lobbied 17 key members of Congress, joined by business leader, investor, and paid leave advocate Alexis Ohanian as well as key executives from Unilever. Also secured major national media coverage and held reception with Future Forum to cultivate congressional paid leave champions

CARES ACT

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted shutdowns across U.S. communities and the economy. Congress passed CARES Act to provide economic relief including temporary paid family and medical leave – the nation's first passage of federal paid leave policy

NATIONAL AD CAMPAIGN

PL+US launched "A New Normal" the largest TV and digital ad campaign for paid leave to date which won national recognition and awards

FEB - MAY

OCT

NOV

MAY

JUN

JUL - AUG

OCT

MAR

MAR - JUL

CAMPAIGN WIN

Following years of internal and external pressure from PL+US and partners, Walgreens expanded paid parental leave policy for 240,000 full-time employees

HOUSE COMMITTEE HEARING

Key House Ways and Means Committee Hearing on paid leave featuring two PL+US Advocates

GEORGETOWN REPORT

In partnership with the Georgetown Law School Center on Poverty and Inequality, PL+US released landmark report recommending 6 months of paid family and medical leave, "A New Approach to Paid Family and Medical Leave: What Doctors and Experts Tell Us About Designing a Paid Family & Medical Leave Program that Works for All"

PRESIDENTIAL SCORECARD

PL+US Action launched presidential scorecard detailing candidates' stances on paid family and medical leave, resulting in every Democratic candidate in the primary taking a pro-paid leave position. Then-Senator Kamala Harris embraced the proposal for a six month paid family and medical leave program, the boldest stance to date for any presidential candidate

ESSENTIAL WORKER CAMPAIGNS

Ran campaigns at pandemic onset to ensure essential working people at Amazon, Lyft, Uber, and FedEx, McDonalds, Tyson Foods, and Shipt could access paid leave. Resulted in expansion of access to paid medical leave at Tyson Foods and generated national media coverage in the LA Times, Essence, and others

2020 ENDORSEMENTS

PL+US Action endorsed the Biden-Harris campaign and 3 Democratic candidates for U.S. Senate (North Carolina, Arizona, and Iowa) in politically valuable states and hosted roundtables with candidates and Advocates

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Joe Biden elected 46th President of the United States and Kamala Harris elected Vice President of the United States. Democrats maintained control of the House of Representatives

WORKPLACE REPORT

In partnership with Promundo and the Parental Leave Corporate Taskforce, PL+US released the report "Paid Leave and the Pandemic," which documents how paid leave policies helped businesses successfully navigate the COVID-19 crisis

STATE TREASURERS LETTER

PL+US worked with 17 state treasurers from across the country to send an open letter to Congress urging them to pass the paid leave legislation being put forward in President Biden's forthcoming American Families Plan

BUSINESS WEEK OF ACTION

Businesses for Paid Leave Week of Action: PL+US and coalition partners organized a virtual fly-in week where business leaders from companies - including Salesforce, Airbnb, Stitch Fix, Patagonia, Paypal and more - met with key leaders in Congress, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, generating national media coverage

ART FOR ACTION EVENTS

Taking advantage of Congress' August Recess, PL+US Action held three Art for Action events in states (AZ, NH, OH) deemed critical for passing paid leave. The events received support from the key House Ways and Means Committee and were attended by Senator Maggie Hassan (D-NH)

SEP

OCT

NOV

JAN

MAR

APR

JUN

AUG

CONVERSATION ON CARE

PL+US Action partnered with movement leaders and the Biden-Harris campaign to host a Conversation on Care on the night of the VP debates, where now Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff reiterated the campaign's commitment to champion a federal paid leave policy

DEMS CONTROL SENATE

Democratic Senate candidates won both runoff elections in Georgia, giving Democrats a 50-50 tie in the Senate

BUSINESS LETTER TO CONGRESS

PL+US launched an open letter signed by 350+ businesses worth a combined \$500+ billion - including Pinterest, Salesforce, Spotify, Etsy, Levi's, Patagonia, and more - urging Congress to include permanent paid family and medical leave in the next economic recovery package. Complemented the letter launch with an ad in the Washington Post

BIDEN PLAN

Biden announced his proposal to enact a national paid family and medical leave program through the American Families Plan

SMALL BUSINESS AD CAMPAIGN

PL+US Action launched an online ad campaign highlighting small business owners in AZ, NH, VA, and WV calling for a national paid leave program to help level the playing field for small businesses

2021

ARIZONA ROUNDTABLE

PL+US held a virtual roundtable with AARP and Advocates in Arizona to discuss the importance of paid leave for caregiving and the country's aging adult population

EARNED & PAID MEDIA BLITZ

Launched paid media ad campaigns "This is the Moment" and "Women are Watching"; conducted Satellite Media Tour generating local news coverage in 25 markets; led grassroots SMS campaign generating 1.6 million texts to voters in battleground states; sent 250k emails to Congress in support of paid leave

RAPID RESPONSE RALLIES

When paid leave was excluded from an initial Build Back Better deal, PL+US staged rapid response rallies in New York and California to illustrate the broad public support for paid leave outside the homes and offices of House and Senate leadership

PAID LEAVE RESTORED

The day after the PL+US Capitol Hill vigil, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi moved to include paid leave in the final version of the Build Back Better reconciliation legislation

TARGETED SENATE ADVOCACY

PL+US and PL+US Action deployed a 360° campaign in West Virginia with paid media, SMS, earned media, and partner activations and launched a letter from diverse constituency voices in New York State to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer

BBB COLLAPSES

Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) publicly declared he would not support BBB; negotiations around BBB collapsed

AUG

SEP - OCT

NOV

DEC

BUILD BACK BETTER PROGRESS

With the leadership of House Ways and Means Chairman Rep. Richard Neal, national paid leave policy moved forward towards final passage when a robust plan similar to the one outlined in President Biden's American Families Plan was included in the draft text of the Build Back Better (BBB) Act

GALVANIZED ADVOCATE COMMUNITIES

PL+US brought the voices of NICU parents, leaders in the substance use and addiction recovery community, domestic violence survivors, and other constituencies key to decision makers to voice their support for paid leave as Build Back Better negotiations continued

#SAVEPAIDLEAVE HILL VIGIL

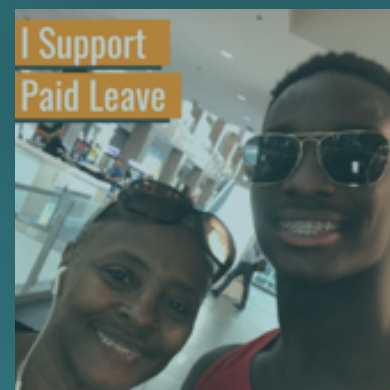
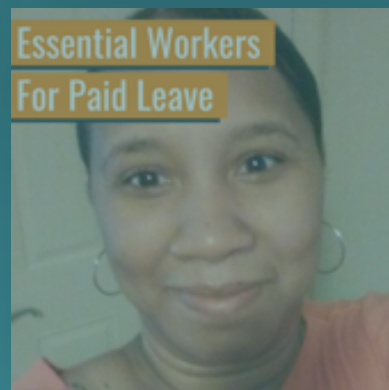
Working together with other paid leave movement allies, PL+US hosted a day-long vigil to #SavePaidLeave on the steps of the U.S. Capitol Building that featured two dozen members of Congress and the stories of paid leave Advocates from across the country

PAID LEAVE PASSES HOUSE

Just over two weeks later, the U.S. House passed the Build Back Better bill including paid leave, a historic first for permanent federal paid leave legislation

CAMPAIGN WIN

After PL+US-led corporate accountability campaign, Publix Grocery announced that they would begin providing paid leave for their 225,000 employees, expanding paid leave for low-wage working people



OUR SUNSET

*Sunsetting Amid Legislative Uncertainty
and the Promise of the Next Chapter*

THE FINAL SPRINT

From its creation in 2016, PL+US was designed as a five-year campaign to win paid leave for every working person. While PL+US remained singularly focused on that goal, the context shifted in multiple significant, unexpected ways: a campaign that was designed to grow and succeed in building a grassroots movement for paid leave in anticipation of a Democratic President (Hillary Clinton, 2016) had to find paths to possibility in a very different political context.

The presidency of Donald Trump fostered a divisive and explosive political environment while also revealing that some form of paid leave policy could be supported on the right. The COVID-19 pandemic presented a set of unimaginable challenges, but highlighted in the clearest possible terms how broken the social safety net is and the essential nature of universal paid leave policy. The election of Joe Biden, along with Democratic control of the House and tie-break vote in the Senate, delivered a decades-in-the-making moment of opportunity for paid leave policy.

While PL+US could not have engineered these global forces, the campaign was ready with the strategy, staff, energy, and resources for the legislative push to meet the moment.

The campaign to pass BBB – a sweeping and historic legislative package that featured several key priorities including paid leave, affordable childcare, the Child Tax Credit, and many more – launched in January and endured for 15 months. The intensity and scope of the campaign provided both opportunities and challenges for PL+US. BBB provided an opportunity to put to use all of its relationships, tools, and learnings from the prior four years and deploy them to advocate for live legislation that was positioned in the national spotlight.

PL+US was able to convert business allies into a legislative force on Capitol Hill and in the White House, seek and share individual stories from around the country to build support among the media and elected officials, and allocate significant funding to political intelligence gathering, lobbying, and paid media.

More than 350 businesses signed a letter of support for paid leave, showing the scale and breadth of private sector support for public policy; PL+US grassroots supporters sent more than 250,000 emails to members of Congress, showing popular demand and urgency; PL+US sent 1.6 million text messages to voters in battleground states, building the political salience and relevance of paid leave; and PL+US and PL+US Action spent \$2 million on paid media in 2021 alone, one of the most significant investments in ads for the paid leave movement to date.

The length of the campaign challenged PL+US to be nimble and creative in deploying new and effective tactics and be scrupulous with its resources. The structure of the legislative package with multiple priorities in the care space also provided a narrative opportunity to link these complementary policies together and tell a holistic story. On the other hand, as the package was negotiated down to a smaller size, policies were pushed to compete with one another, fracturing parts of the advocacy community and perpetuating an unhelpful narrative around the need to choose between multiple vital care priorities.

While PL+US continued to advance its own strategy and do the work that it was uniquely positioned to do in the lead up to and throughout this push, this phase of the campaign required greater coordination and collaboration with the broader paid leave coalition. With the greatest potential for a policy win in decades within reach, PL+US and the paid leave coalition worked arm in arm, drawing on each organization's strengths, telling a cohesive story, and leading a coordinated mobilization effort. This collaboration and partnership served this phase of the campaign effectively and helped build trust and transparency among the campaign and coalition leadership.

The paid leave framework included in BBB reflected the key components of high-quality, comprehensive policy and showed how far the nation's understanding of good policy had come. Notably, the proposal offered a policy for all working people, at all businesses, across all sectors, and covered parental, caregiving, and personal medical leave.



Executive Director Molly Day shields Paid Leave for All Director Dawn Huckelbridge from the rain at the #SavePaidLeave Vigil on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC on November 2, 2021

Importantly, by securing the provision's passage in the U.S. House, the campaign helped advance paid leave policy through the legislative process farther than ever before. While paid leave never passed the Senate, the campaign can be proud of the huge milestones it achieved along the way.

PL+US was always clear-eyed that legislative success was not guaranteed with a time-bound campaign. While PL+US did not ultimately achieve a legislative victory on the campaign's time

horizon, it closes its doors with a great sense of achievement and great hope for the future across both the public and private sectors. Prodded into action by our accountability work and empowered to deliver strong policies with the support of critical workplace guidance developed by PL+US, dozens of employers implemented new paid leave policies or enhanced existing policies.

In the wake of the 2021 legislative fight, the passage of national paid leave policy, while not moving quickly enough to meet the country's immediate needs, looks like a political inevitability. Nationally, support across party lines remains high, the issue has greater salience in the public dialogue than ever before, state policies continue to expand and provide valuable proof points for a federal policy, and the private sector is continuing to lead in expanding workplace policies in the absence of federal policy.

Politically, paid leave is an issue that has already been more prominently featured in the lead up to the 2022 midterm elections and is increasingly an issue that is a must-include in Democratic policy platforms. In recent years, Republicans have shown greater appetite for supporting paid leave and have put forward versions of paid leave proposals; at the same time, there has been a softening of opposition from business lobby and trade associations. Given this landscape and continued broad based support, there may be a greater opportunity for collaboration across the bipartisan spectrum to reach consensus on a federal policy framework and pay-for that will be comprehensive and inclusive for all working people.

The need to build more power across the key pillars PL+US identified in 2016 remain true today: political, legislative, narrative, business and grassroots.

The campaign remains confident and hopeful that the movement will continue to build power in these key places, creating the conditions for the ultimate win for working families.

PL+US is leaving the arena, but every individual touched by the PL+US campaign will carry the fight for paid leave in their hearts and remain invested until the final win.

A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends, Partners and Advocates,

As the two leaders of PL+US over its five-year campaign, we face the setting sun with extraordinary pride. The PL+US community has accomplished so much: winning employer-based leave for more than 8 million people, changing the public narrative on paid leave in the U.S., and advancing a federal paid leave proposal through the House for the first time in history. Together, we built a powerful and diverse community of people dedicated to ensuring that no one ever has to decide between a paycheck and being there for themselves or a loved one. We are forever grateful to every person who shared their story in service of advancing the work. Because of you, we are closer than ever before to winning paid leave for every working person in this country.

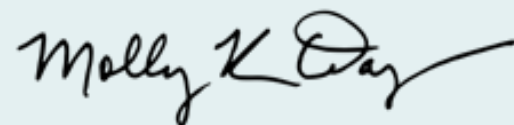
We are equally proud of the way we worked and the kind of workplace our team built together. PL+US' expectation of our team – that we could do excellent work and prioritize caregiving for ourselves and our loved ones – was not just mission-aligned; it was radical, especially in the landscape of advocacy and campaigning. It may not have been inexpensive or easy, but it was worth it and it worked. And this commitment to supporting each other as human beings drove our profound fidelity to the mission and prompted the best and most engaged work of our careers.

We hope that the PL+US journey might inspire and equip others to redefine possibility in other ways in support of a better world.

With sincere gratitude and hope,



Katie Bethell
PL+US Founder



Molly Day
PL+US Executive Director

Throughout our five years of work, we have remained true to our five values. As we sign off, we offer five final thoughts, framed through those values:

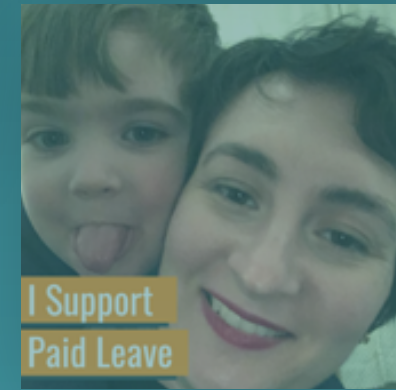
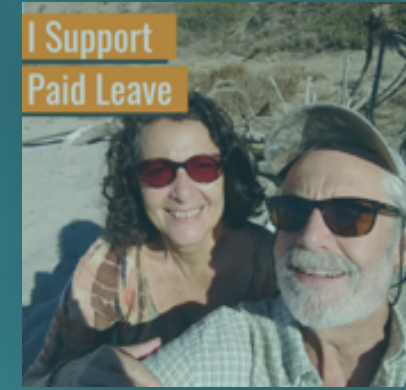
BE BOLD. There is value in a movement embracing multiple theories of change. Ideally, movements should welcome a diversity of theories, if not, stay true to your vision and go it alone.

BE CURIOUS. Ask all the questions and question all the assumptions. “The way things have always been done” is not always the best way to do things.

BE EXCELLENT. Even a small campaign can achieve outsized results by maintaining a relentless focus on the end goal.

BE REAL. Effective advocacy work today often includes political work, including c4 and PAC activities. Funders should fund this work and advocates should not shy away from it.

BE COMPASSIONATE. It is possible to run a results-oriented nonprofit advocacy organization where team members feel empowered to take the time they need to care for themselves and others.



SHOUTOUTS

A Final Note of Gratitude

OUR THANKS

At PL+US' weekly team meetings, we practiced gratitude for one another through shoutouts – words of appreciation to acknowledge teammates' contributions, large and small. In appreciation for our whole community, we offer one big, final round of shout-outs.

PL+US could not have done its work without the support and collaboration of countless individuals and organizations. We also want to thank to all former staff members, Board Members, Funders, and Partners who powered our journey every step of the way and believed in the possibility of paid leave for every working person.

Current and Former Board Members

PL+US

Parker Blackman,
Chair

Nick Allardice

Kara Gustafson

Tolu Lawrence

Missy Narula

Chloe Sladden

Erin Thornton

Swati Mylavarapu

Melissa Sandgren

PL+US Action

Sara El-Amine,
Chair

Nick Allardice

Brianna Cayo Cotter

Natalie Foster

Julie Kohler

Staff

Katie Bethell

Chrissy Blitz

Alexis Carter-Black

Jaymie Cobb

Orli Cotel

Molly Day

Aliya Glenn

Tamirra Hoye

Kenya Juarez

Sofia Kromis

Sarah Layton

Mary Lizardi

Karen Mac

Cara McClain

Kate McCleese

Karin Roland

Corinne Roller

Annie Sartor

Bridget Shea

Neil Sroka

Jordyn Avila

*And sincere thanks
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members who helped
build PL+US*

Institutional Funders

California HealthCare
Foundation

David and Lucile
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Heising-Simons
Foundation

Hull Family Foundation

Incite Ventures

L.A. Partnership
for Early Childhood
Investment

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New Media Ventures

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Schwab Charitable

Stein Early Childhood
Development Fund

Streisand Foundation

Tara Health Foundation

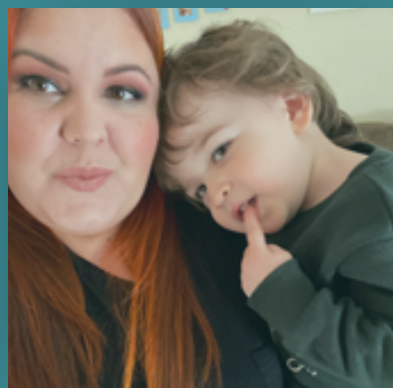
W.K. Kellogg
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Vollman Family
Foundation

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to each and every
individual and family
who gave in support of
this work*



PL+US OFFERS **DEEP THANKS TO OUR ADVOCATES**, EACH OF WHOM WAS BRAVE ENOUGH TO SHARE THEIR STORY AND INSPIRED US TO DO THIS WORK EVERY SINGLE DAY.



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Thank you for your incredible
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SARAH,
THANK YOU FOR
WEAVING SO MUCH
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OUR TIME AT PL+US!

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Thank you for stepping up
and using your voice. Our
organization is stronger
for it!

Kate,
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are unmatched... We could
not be as successful or even
close without you.

Kenya,
Thank you for just
being you and always
showing up as your true
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Shout out:

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ago & fighting to make
others see it too.

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which helped us
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coworker. It's obvious
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and the way you show
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approach is the magic
we didn't know we
needed - thank you ♥

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Thanks for
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Don't stop building power
and sharing it with those
around you.

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Bridget
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always pushed me to be
a better organizer.

Annie,
you make
the spaces
around you
feel safe and
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Thank you.

Orli Cotel, Pd+Us Senior Advisor,
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together and work
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I really admire
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& the way you always
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Thank you for
always keeping it
real & keeping me
laughing along the
way!

Neil -
Thank you for the levity + joyful
irreverence you gifted our team
culture, & more importantly, thank
you for being an EXCEPTIONAL
Comms leader and true pro
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A group of diverse people, including women, men, and a child, are standing in a hallway. They are holding signs with names on them, such as "ROSARIO LUIS", "RYAN CEZAR", and "JESSIE BRAKER". The image has a warm, orange-toned overlay.

PLUS

*Redefining Possibility: The Fight for Quality
Paid Family and Medical Leave for Everyone (2022)*

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