



**Working America persuaded an estimated 105,000 people to practice social distancing behaviors such as canceling social gatherings, wearing face masks in public and postponing elective medical treatments.**

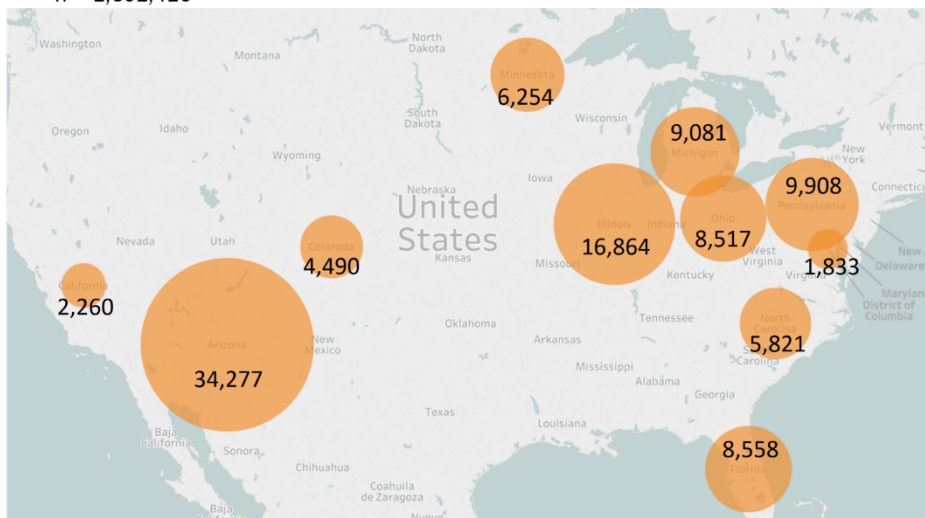
The covid-19 pandemic has touched virtually every corner of the globe. Working America, known principally for our field canvass organizing, has adapted to this new environment by shifting our capacity and expertise to other less visible parts of our work: digital organizing, rigorous clinical analytics, and the relationship currency built from face-to-face conversations with 3.5 million members.

How did we have such a large impact on public health? We surveyed 4,108 voters in mid-March, identified which populations were least concerned about covid-19, and went to work contacting nearly 3 million individuals via email, text messaging and live calls in late March and early April. Afterward, we re-surveyed both those who got our contact (treatment group) and those who did not (control group).

The result: we increased the number of people observing social distancing behaviors (and decreased the infection rates) in every state we targeted.

### Consistent Contact Adds New Social Distancers

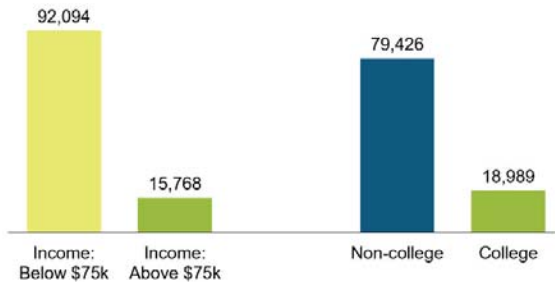
*Number of Social Distancers Due to Contact by State  
n = 2,592,426*



Even more importantly, the behavior changes were concentrated among the most vulnerable populations: people of color and working-class wage earners.

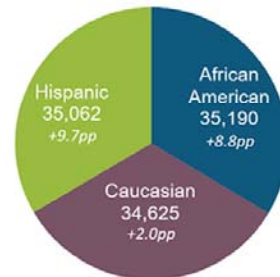
## Lower Income and Non-College More Responsive

Number of Social Distancers Due to Contact by Income and College Education  
n = 2,592,426



## People of Color More Likely to Increase Social Distancing When Engaged

Number of Social Distancers Due to Contact by Race/Ethnicity and Treatment Effect  
n = 2,592,426



In follow up phone interviews (n=811) among voters in Arizona, we heard the heightened level of anxiety confronting working people. **More than one-third reported that either they or someone in their home had already lost employment.**

Rebecca, a 66-year-old **Chandler, Arizona** resident, told our canvasser, “My son was laid off. My daughter works for Dell and was laid off. My other daughter works for the school system and was laid off. The only one who wasn’t is a pharmacist and is essential.”

Another canvasser spoke with Matthew, a 34-year-old **Mesa, Arizona** resident and restaurant worker who was laid off in March. When asked what his immediate needs were, Matthew said, “My immediate needs are everything: a job, job security and food.”

Now we are following up with all three million people to share information about how to access unemployment insurance in their states. We will also let them know about ways they can access health insurance either on the health care exchanges or via state Medicaid programs.

Beyond these immediate needs, we recognize the importance of continuing to help these workers navigate the uncertain economic landscape and demand an economy that puts working people first. Our plan is to continue to be a trusted source of information for these workers.

### Looking Ahead

While news about the covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic crisis dominate our daily lives, we also must keep an eye toward the general election in November, especially given the role of elected officials both in resolving, and in some instances contributing to, these twin tragedies.

One particularly sobering outcome is how little voters have changed their assessment of President Trump, even in a paralyzed economy. Among the Working America survey of these targeted voters (people we intended to contact ahead of the election, not a reflective of the fuller electorate), we see that despite all of the missteps, support for President Trump’s reelection was unchanged from early

March to early April, the period that widespread economic shutdowns have had a dramatic impact on these very voters.

Working America Tracking Survey- Change in 2020 Presidential Vote Choice (3/6/20- 4/15/20)		
State (N size)	Biden	Trump
MI (131)	1%	0%
MN (755)	-3%	1%
NC (548)	-3%	0%
OH (486)	-2%	-1%
PA (476)	2%	-2%

These battleground state voters do not blame the president’s response for the severity of the crises, a trend broadly consistent with [public tracking polls](#).

One potential key to understanding the lack of change in the view of the President was clear from our initial research into covid-19 opinion. Despite what were even ubiquitous and alarming reports about the threat from the disease starting in early March, large swaths of working-class people simply were not watching the news.

Sub-group	Share Concerned About COVID-19 (March 9, 2020) n=3,811
African American	68%
Caucasian	63%
Hispanic	60%
Non-College	55%
College	72%
Income below \$75k	59%
Income above \$75k	70%

But there is also promising news. Not only do we see a change in opinion, awareness and behavior when we communicate with these voters on issues (which we have not done on the presidential election), but we also see that their confidence in Working America has increased as well -- up by 7 points because of our communication on the issues that impact people’s lives.

While we cannot knock on doors right now, we are seeing that the trust we build now will make all of the difference in how these voters listen when we return to their front porches.