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## Press Release

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Young People Poised to be Political Game-Changers**

### ***Diverse Panel of Experts Discuss Triumphs, Challenges of Youth Activism Post-Election***

Washington, DC—Amid doubts about young people’s seriousness about participating in policy debates and politics, in this election, young voters not only matched, but surpassed their turnout in previous years, representing 18% of all voters (CIRCLE report, 11/4/08.) Most remarkably, for the first time in twenty years, young voter share eclipsed that of voters over 65, who made up 16% of the electorate this year (Student PIRGs New Voters Project, 11/5/08.)

At an event yesterday sponsored by Campus Progress “Are Today’s Young People Political Game-Changers?” a diverse group of panelists discussed the growing and substantive political engagement of the young generation, concluding that young people have not only proven that they are a powerful political force to be reckoned with, but that their engagement around the issues suggests that they will have staying power in the years to come.

As Panelist Reverend Lennox Yearwood Jr., President and CEO of the Hip Hop Caucus said, “This became [young people’s] ‘lunch counter’ moment for the 21st Century. It became the moment when we recognized...if we don’t do it now, then we’re never going to do it. Our climate is going to be disastrous, [and] our school systems. We put humanity at the forefront, and we went to the polls and just turned it out.”

The panel also featured Kat Barr, Political Outreach Director at Rock the Vote; David Madland, Director of the American Worker Project at the Center for American Progress Action Fund; and Amanda Carpenter, National Political Reporter for Townhall.com, and was moderated by Erica Williams, Policy and Advocacy manager at Campus Progress. The event was co-sponsored by Energy Action Coalition, of which Campus Progress is a part.

The event coincided with the release of a new report by David Madland, *The Progressive Future is Here* which provides an analysis of exit and other polls that explain what motivated young people to vote in the election. You can read the full report online here.

Audio of the event is available here. If you require additional information, or would like to speak to any of the panelists, please don’t hesitate to contact Katie Andriulli at 202-481-8238 or kandriulli@americanprogress.org.

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*Campus Progress is the youth division of the Center for American Progress, a nonpartisan, nonprofit progressive organization. Through programs in activism, journalism, and events, Campus Progress helps young people make their voices heard now on issues that matter, and works with young leaders and organizations nationwide to build a strong, united progressive movement that can bring long-term positive change. Campus Progress runs a daily web magazine, [CampusProgress.org](http://CampusProgress.org); supports student publications on 50 campuses; supports local and national student issue campaigns; and has held over 350 events and film screenings. For more information, please visit [www.campusprogress.org](http://www.campusprogress.org).*

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