



Heather Smith

President

Under Smith's leadership during the past two election cycles, Rock the Vote built new tools and refined best practices for the continued engagement of young voters, setting the highest voter registration records in both midterm and presidential elections in the organization's 21-year history. In 2010, Smith led Rock the Vote in its largest midterm election effort that generated more than 300,000 voter registration applications, engaged thousands of volunteers, and increased youth turnout in targeted precincts. This work built on the successful efforts of 2008, when Rock the Vote registered a record-shattering 2.25 million people.

Prior to Rock the Vote, Smith founded and directed Young Voter Strategies, a nonpartisan project in partnership with The Graduate School of Political Management at The George Washington University with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts. Young Voter Strategies provided the general public, political parties, candidates, consultants and non-profits with data and research on the youth vote as well as best practices to effectively mobilize young people.

In 2004, Smith served as national field director for the Student PIRG's New Voters Project, the largest nonpartisan grassroots effort ever undertaken to register and mobilize young voters. Under Smith's direction, the New Voters Project registered nearly 600,000 voters and conducted an intensive, multi-faceted get-out-the-vote effort to bring these newly registered voters to the polls on Election Day. Youth turnout was 11 percentage points higher than in 2000.

Prior to her work at the New Voters Project, Smith was an organizing director for Green Corps' Field School for Environmental Organizing in Boston.

Smith has served as a youth vote expert appearing on MSNBC, CBS 'Washington Unplugged,' Fox News, and CNN, in addition to writing for and being quoted in publications such as *Rolling Stone*, *The Huffington Post*, *National Journal*, *The Hill*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Nation*, *The Washington Post*, *POLITICO*, *The Atlantic*, and more.

Smith received a B.A. with honors in Economics and Public Policy from Duke University. In 2006, Smith was named one of Campaign & Elections magazine's Rising Stars for her work with young voters. She was also named one of Esquire Magazine's Best and Brightest of 2007.