

# Black Hawk County Democrats



**Strategic Plan 2023-2025**

# **Organizational Context**

**Our Mission: The Black Hawk County Democrats strive to mobilize, activate, and support those who seek to promote the values of the Democratic party in Black Hawk County**

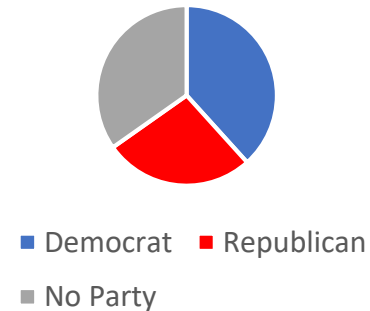
**Our Vision: A county where people understand and embrace core Democratic values, act together as a vibrant and dynamic community and elect the best and brightest Democratic candidates to office**

**Our Values: Freedom, justice, inclusivity, diversity, equity**

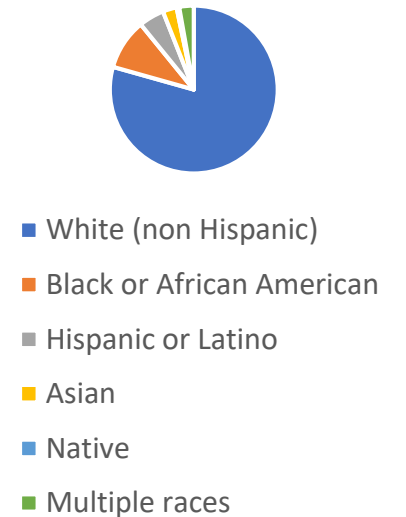
# Local Context

The population of Black Hawk County is around 130,368. The population has a median household income of \$57,191, which is slightly lower than the state statistic. This is dependent on location within the county, and there is wide variation between urban and rural areas and between some of the towns and others. Similarly, the average education level for the whole county is slightly less than average for Iowa, however some specific areas have much higher levels of education (Cedar Falls, for example) and some have much lower, such as Evansdale. Black Hawk county has 87,943 registered voters (67.4%). Of these, 37.9% are registered Democrats, 26.7% are registered Republicans and 34.4% are not affiliated with either party.

Voter  
Registration



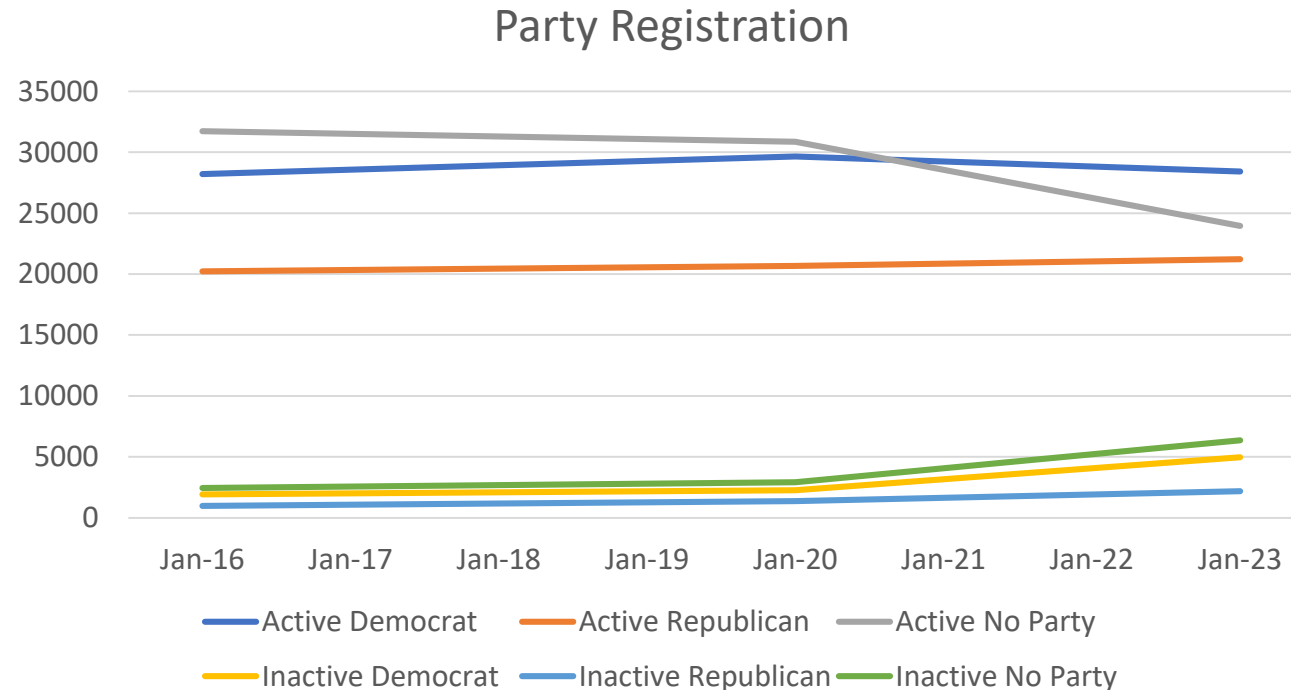
Demographics



# Local Context

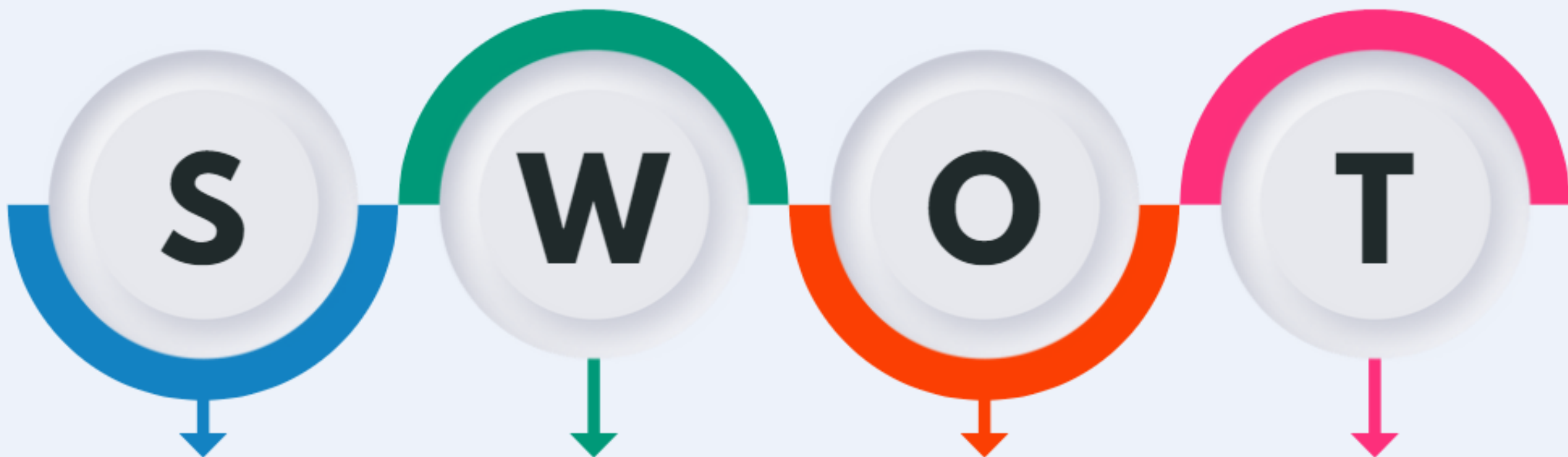
As of January 2023, there are 28,416 active registered Democrats in Black Hawk County, which is down 4.2% from January 2020, but up slightly from 2016. Part of the decrease from 2020 can be explained by a law passed in 2021 where all voters who did not vote in the 2020 election were placed on the "inactive" list. If someone remains on the "inactive" list for four years, they are removed from the voter rolls.

It is also important to note that nationally there has been a trend in 2022 and the beginning of 2023 toward suburban residents changing their registration from Democrat to Republican.



# SWOT ANALYSIS

---



## STRENGTHS

- Quality elected officials
- Experienced leadership
- Strong Democratic presence in county
- Strong finances

## WEAKNESSES

- Party participation
- Central Committee engagement
- Fundraising
- Recruitment
- Unity of effort
- Clear messaging
- Infrastructure

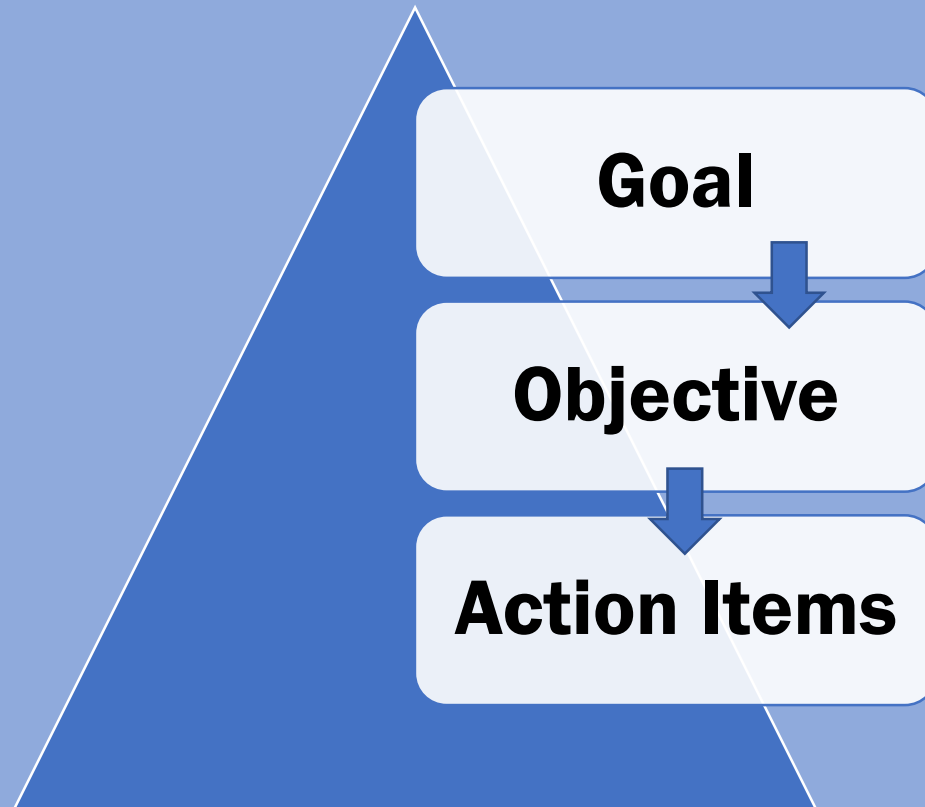
## OPPORTUNITIES

- Untapped resources
- Quality connections
- Diversity
- Party registration share
- Student population

## THREATS

- Voter turnout
- Aging leadership
- Misinformation
- Apathy/sense of defeat
- Lack of trust
- Racism/sexism
- Weak support from state and national parties

The mission of the Black Hawk County Democratic Party is to mobilize, activate, and support those who seek to promote the values of the Democratic party in Black Hawk County. With that in mind, our primary goal is to get Democrats elected to office in Black Hawk County. This goal will be supported by a variety of objectives that clarify what it is that we are trying to accomplish, how we will do that, and the timeline on which we are doing it.



# **Objectives: What we must do to support our goal**

- **Increase the number of registered Democrats in BHC by 10% by 2025**
- **Increase voter turnout among Democrats in BHC to 25% for the 2024 primary election and 80% for the general election**
- **Ensure a Democrat is running in 100% of the elections in BHC in the 2024 election**
- **Increase turnout at monthly BHCD meetings by 50% by the end of 2023**
- **Create a new comprehensive yearly budget by the end of 2023**
- **Increase yearly funds by 20% by the 2024 election over the 2020 cycle levels**
- **Create a master calendar by the end of 2023**
- **Fill 100% of the Central Committee positions by June 2023**
- **Improve and expand web and social media presence by the end of 2023**

# **#1 Increase the number of registered Democrats in BHC by 10% by 2025**

**Reasoning: Voters voting for Democratic candidates is the only way to win elections. Although there are more registered Democrats than Republicans in BHC, over a third of registered voters are not affiliated with a party. These voters turned out at high rates in the last general elections.**

- **Do quarterly registration events at UNI and Hawkeye.**
- **Sponsor registration events at freshman orientation at UNI and Hawkeye.**
- **Hold registration drives at events such as Pride, Irish Fest, Iowa Eats Food and Drink Festival, College Hill Arts Festival, Food Truck Festival, Junk-a-Loo, Friday Loo and Mayor's Fireworks.**
- **Establish Young Democrat clubs at all area high schools and Hawkeye by Fall 2024.**
- **Outreach to 100% of Independent registered voters by the end of 2023.**
- **Sponsor community events with speakers and activities.**
- **Coordinate with and reach out to new citizens, speakers of other languages, and other marginalized groups.**
- **Stay on top of laws that make it harder to vote and find ways to work around them.**
- **Expand use of local TV and radio to promote events and activities.**



## **#2 Increase voter turnout among Democrats in BHC to 25% for the 2024 primary election and 80% for the general election**

**Reasoning: Candidates can't win unless people vote for them, and turnout is the best way to ensure this. In 2022 Republican voters in BHC turned out at higher rates than Democrats.**

- **Ramp up door knocking during election season. Increase number of volunteers doing this by 1/3.**
- **Hold phone banking “parties” with games, prizes, food, and community to make voter contact fun.**
- **Contact 100% of the Democrats on the inactive list to talk about why they didn't vote and to encourage them to turn out in 2024.**
- **Focus social media on instructions and reminders for both mail-in and in-person voting prior to elections.**
- **Build a rural outreach plan.**
- **Coordinate rides to polls from strategic areas on election days.**
- **Create and distribute “legislative alerts” to apprise Democrats about pending legislation to keep people informed and engaged.**

## **#3 Ensure a Democrat is running in 100% of the elections in BHC in the 2024 election**

**Reasoning: Unopposed candidates always win. Further, elections where there is no Democratic candidate send a message that the Republican party is a foregone conclusion and that we have given up.**

- **Start early to identify and recruit candidates.**
- **Make efforts to recruit women, people of color, people with disabilities, and younger people.**
- **Enlist the assistance of experienced campaigners to advise and mentor potential candidates.**
- **Provide campaign-training workshops for candidates. Record these sessions and make materials available to all potential candidates.**
- **Support candidates with resources and campaign assistance.**
- **Work closely with volunteers to identify and pair volunteers with their preferred candidates or activities.**
- **Maintain relationships with unsuccessful candidates, using them for “lessons learned” as well as future elections.**

## **#4 Increase turnout at monthly BHCD meetings by 50% by the end of 2023**

**Reasoning: Higher levels of participation are good, not only for buy-in and getting work done, but for creating a more unified party with a clear message. Attendance also increases the capacity for policy and position knowledge.**

- **Consider making meetings shorter by trimming agendas and sticking more closely to them.**
- **Plan events that are for connecting, socializing, and general chatting so that meetings can be limited to agenda.**
- **Connect with UNI Democrats student group and encourage participation in meetings.**
- **Reach out to elected officials to emphasize the importance of their attendance and the role of their leadership in the party.**
- **Each quarter identify a specific pressing social or economic issue and plan actionable events in conjunction with the regular meetings to foster greater public awareness regarding these issues.**
- **Reach out to area groups with similar values and goals and invite members to meetings.**

## **#5 Create a new comprehensive yearly budget by the end of 2023**

**Reasoning: Budgets are vital for setting the priorities of an organization, providing transparency for stakeholders, and organizing activities**

- **Central Committee will meet to review current budget procedures and revise if necessary.**
- **Treasurer will draft comprehensive budget for 2024 and disseminate to membership by close of 2023.**

# **#6 Increase yearly funds by 20% by the 2024 election over the 2020 cycle levels**

**Reasoning: Money can be used to support candidates and to increase the organizational capacity of the BHC Democratic Party**

- **Update the donor database.**
- **Develop a timeline for fundraising events and projects and add it to the master calendar.**
- **Expand monthly sustainer and trustee donor programs by 15% by the election.**
- **Identify and implement new fundraising events/opportunities.**
- **Hold at least one fundraiser in 2023.**

## **#7 Create a master calendar by the end of 2023**

- **Reasoning: Volunteers will be better able to plan their participation, and leadership can more effectively divide up work and coordinate events.**

- **Central Committee leadership will start with the calendar from the Iowa State Democratic Party**
- **They will then add all of the local events, meetings, elections, deadlines, etc.**
- **This calendar will be disseminated to the party membership and posted on the website.**

## **#8 Fill 100% of the Central Committee positions by June 2023**

**Reasoning: There is work to be done to ensure that the Democratic Party remains strong in BHC and it takes a strong leadership team to make this happen. Further, having a consistent, dedicated leadership team sends a message of strength, organization, and competency to the constituents.**

- Perform outreach to memberships and to local groups to recruit Central Committee members.**
- Ensure continuity by seeking involvement from younger Democrats such as those at UNI and Hawkeye.**
- Expand reach and support by recruiting rural Democrats to become more involved in party leadership.**

## **#9 Improve and expand media, web, and social media presence by the end of 2023**

**Reasoning: Traditional media, web sites and social media are an opportunity to clarify messages and connect with voters and potential voters. People who understand what the party is about and feel connected to it are more likely to turn out to vote, volunteer, and donate money.**

- **Improve BHCD's website by adding additional information, such as the strategic plan, calendar, and fundraising information.**
- **Expand social media presence by increasing engagement on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.**
- **Hire a student intern to manage all social media.**
- **Get a new Democrat on as a regular contributor at the Courier.**