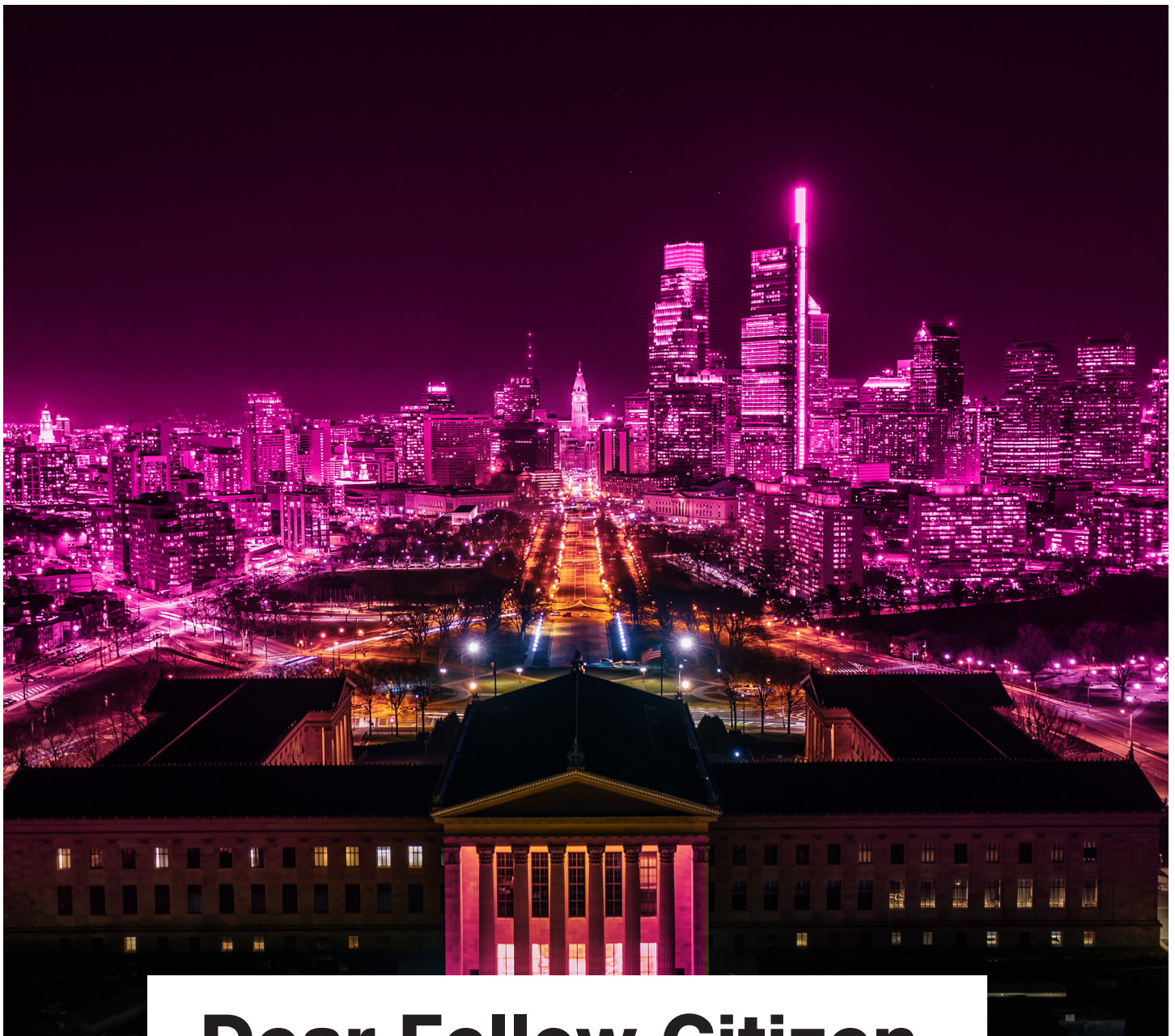


THE PHILADELPHIA

⚡ CITIZEN ⚡

2020 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



Dear Fellow Citizen,

When a group of us, true believers all, started The Citizen nearly six years ago, there were those who teased us about the rather earnest pledge we created to help fuel our mission to defibrillate democracy in the American city where it was born:

**I am more than a resident of Philadelphia.
I am its citizen.
And I dedicate myself to the betterment of my home.
I will stand while others sit.
I will speak when there is silence.
I will read. I will act. I will vote.
I will challenge authority, and challenge myself.**

**I will grow and learn. I will seek out inspiration.
And I will become an inspiration to others.
I stand for Philadelphia.
It is my home.
And I am its citizen.**

But now that 2020 is behind us—with its myriad threats to the very idea of America itself—our words from 2015 have the ring of prophecy to them, don't they?

Because, in the last year, democracy literally stood attacked, and it was collective action that rescued it. You could see that in those Philly voters on election day, toppling a presidency; in

those marching to protest racism and the cops who stayed true to their pledge to keep the peace; in the teachers and first responders on the front lines of a pandemic; in the scientists rushing to find a vaccine; in the countless acts of kindness from one citizen to the other when hope seemed in short supply—the sweeping of a shared street, the shoveling out of a neighbor’s car. Even a random, kind “hello” on a frigid morning—that’s citizenship in action.

- **Why did The Citizen’s online traffic more than double last year?**
- **Why did more than 2,200 of our fellow citizens attend our solutions-based thought-leadership virtual events?**
- **Why do 58 percent of our readers report that they’ve done something to make their city better after hearing about an idea at thephiladelphiacitizen.org?**

Because in times of crisis, when institutions seem shaky and community is fraying all around us, there is something in the American spirit that springs into collective action.

Democracy isn’t just an idea; it’s an act. And acts in pursuit of the common good, piled one on top of another, are how community forms and democracy survives.

That’s what President Barack Obama was getting at in his 2017 farewell address: “For all our outward differences,” he said, “we in fact all share the same proud title, the most important office in a democracy: Citizen.”

Last year, we told you the stories of our fellow citizens who acted, who rejected the notion that democracy is a spectator sport:

- **Citizens like the local business leaders who started the 30 Day Fund that gave away \$3.3 million in \$3,000 forgivable loans to small businesses.**
- **And Those Nerdy Girls, health care workers and scientists who spent the year translating Covid information for all of us.**
- **And Emma Ferguson and Colin Schimmelfing who used their tech skills to build Mask Match, which sent 950,000 masks to healthcare workers in the first six months of the pandemic when PPE was in desperately short supply**

As always, we introduced you to the big ideas that can change our city—and that we should steal.

- **We gave you former Obama Education Secretary Arne Duncan, who’s using jobs to alleviate gun violence in Chicago.**
- **And venture capitalist Sarah Kunst, who pointed out that “investing in diversity brings greater returns.”**
- **And Volusia County, Florida, Sheriff Mike Chitwood, Jr., who’s reducing crime by training his officers as guardians, not warriors.**

But, because our emphasis is also on action, we also oversaw the first class of **Philadelphia’s Integrity Icons**. In partnership with the international nonprofit Accountability Lab, Philly became the first U.S. city to “name and fame” five public servants who represent the best in us.

And with the help of philanthropists Richard Vague, Jeff Brown, Pat Croce, and Spring Point Partners, our Nowak Innovation Award process raised \$85,000 which will lead to the nonprofit **RIP Medical Debt** ultimately clearing \$8.5 million of the hospital debt held by indigent Philadelphians.

Logically speaking, there should be nothing inevitable about the American city, right? I mean, think of what an audacious idea it really is: We’re going to take all these people of different backgrounds, educational levels and passions, and have ‘em live right on top of one another. What could go wrong?

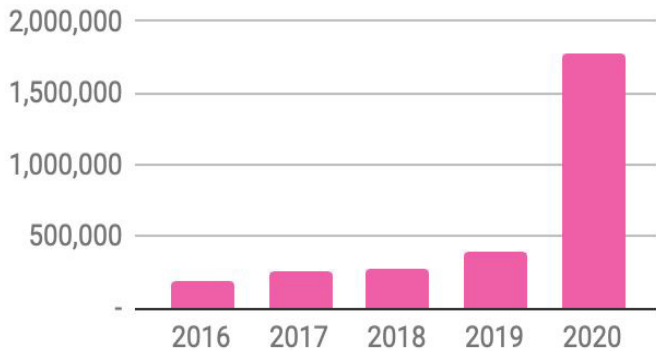
Yet, it’s safe to say now, that all those crisscrossing currents of energy always seem to alchemize into something more dynamic than before. Our commitment is to capture that chemistry in action for you. To document the sometimes maddening, always fascinating, ebb and flow of this quirky and troubled city, and to enlist you in calling it, time and again, toward its better angels. That—speaking of pledges—is ours to you.

Yours in citizenship,

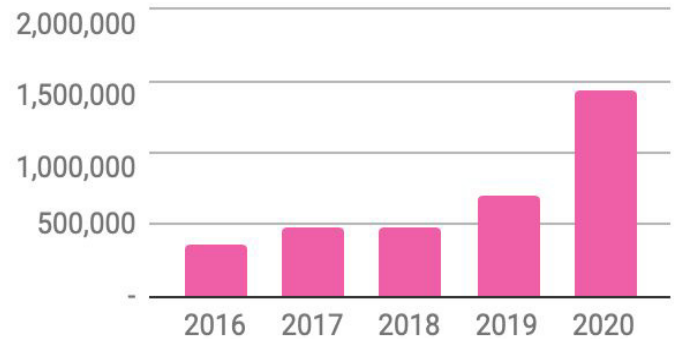
Larry Platt
Citizen Co-founder

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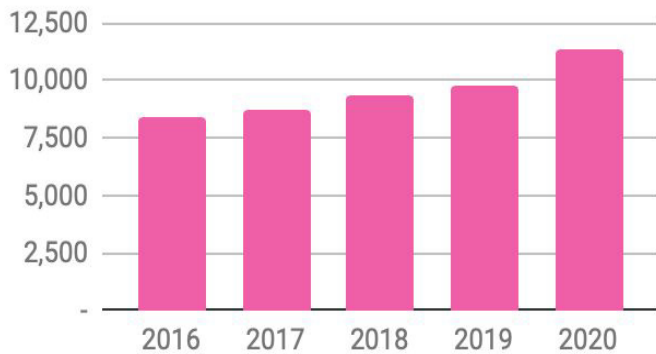
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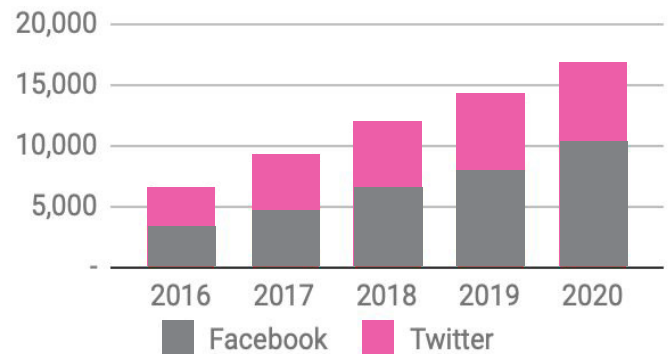
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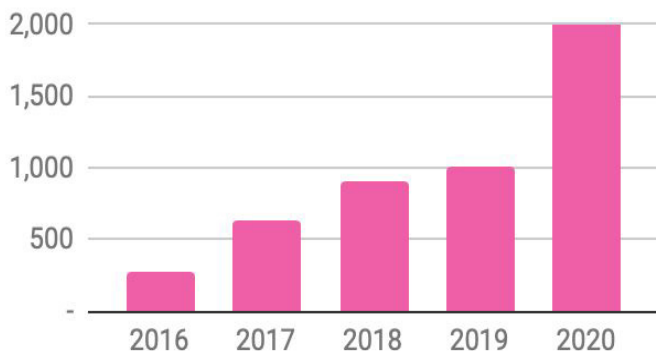
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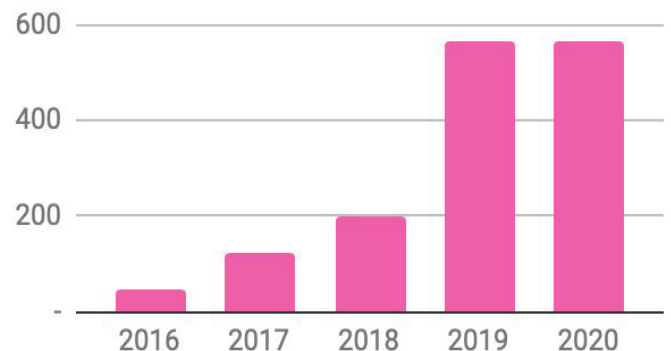
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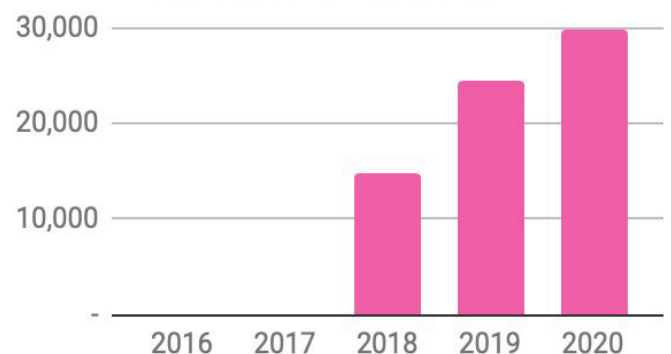
2020 Impact Campaigns

**INTEGRITY ICON
RIP MEDICAL DEBT RELIEF
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ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN**

“Do Something” Clicks

45,075

CitizenCast Downloads



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We seek to identify our innovators, call out those who stand in the way of progress and shine a light on the next generation of Philadelphia leadership—all while giving Philadelphians the interactive tools they need to become more involved, engaged citizens.

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