

Man admits trying to register fake voters for Virginia progressive group

By [Rachel Weiner](#)

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While working for the group New Virginia Majority, Vafalay Massaquoi invented voters and filed false applications with election officials.

Massaquoi, a 30-year-old former Alexandria resident, pleaded guilty Thursday to forging a public record and election fraud. He was sentenced to 500 hours of community service, along with the 90 days he has spent in jail, and a suspended sentence of five years in prison, pending good behavior.

Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter noted in a statement that because Massaquoi simply made up the names of voters, the chance that any fraudulent ballots would actually have been cast was extremely low.

However, he said, "any use of fraud, forgery or subterfuge with regards to voter registration is a very serious matter that deserves a very serious sentence — such as the one obtained in this case."


The applications Massaquoi submitted were not used. Noticing the remarkably similar handwriting on each application and the fact that all the voters came from the same part of the city, Alexandria General Registrar Anna J. Leider turned the applications over to the commonwealth's attorney.

Virginia New Majority, a progressive nonprofit group, acknowledged at the time of his arrest that Massaquoi was a former employee.

A spokesman for the organization said Massaquoi was paid \$15 per hour, and his compensation wasn't related to the number of voters he registered. He was terminated in June, before a warrant for his arrest was issued.

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Rachel Weiner tries to cover Alexandria's federal court from a small windowless room with no cellphone access. She sometimes ventures outside to write about crime in Alexandria and Arlington. [Follow](#) 

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