

The George Washington University

ALL IN Challenge Action Plan

Fall 2016

Submitted by: Amy Cohen, Executive Director Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service

The George Washington University (GW) has been designated as the higher education institution with the [most politically active students](#) by Princeton Review for the [last four years](#). GW has extremely active College Democrats and College Republicans, as well as student organizations that draw both progressives and conservatives to political engagement. In addition, GW students are deeply civically engaged through community service, academic service-learning, and social innovation and entrepreneurship.

GW participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), housed at the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life at Tufts in order to learn more about our student registration and voting rates.

One **exceptional activity** planned is the [Minority Vote](#), a film and project conducted by graduate student Zinhle Essamuah and faculty member Imani Cheers, supported by the Steven and Diane Robinson Knapp Fellowship for Entrepreneurial Service- Learning and the Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service (Nashman Center). The film examines millennial voters and their diverse perspectives on the coming presidential election. It will be shown on campus at least twice in widely attended forums with panel discussion. In addition, the film makers challenge GW students to get involved through a competition, **The Minority Vote Award**, a cash prize awarded to the GW student organization with the most student volunteer hours dedicated to voter registration and/or a local organization supporting minority communities. On [TheMinorityVoteFilm.com](#), students can register to vote, document their voter registration volunteer hours through Noble Hour and connect with others online.

GW's plan to promote voter registration and participation uses the two primary channels available – engagement in person and engagement through the media.

Events

Voter Registration and Participation information is embedded in welcome and back to school events as well as ongoing programming

GW plans to kick off efforts to promote voter registration and participation as students arrive on campus at the end of August. Significant events include:

The University's Office for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement hosts a three-day **Institute for Citizen Leaders (ICL)** for more than 150 returning students who lead service and civic engagement initiatives through the Nashman Center; those who lead the student organizations affiliated with the Multicultural Student Services Center (MSSC); and students who lead programs through the Title IX and Disability Support Services offices.

One highlight of the ICL event is a talk and workshop on how to have **civil dialogue across strong political differences**; the discussion leads to the importance of voter participation.

More than 150 freshmen participate in a pre-semester program, **Community Building Community**, in which they participate and learn about community service and civic engagement in their new DC home, including voter registration and participation.

GW's Freshman Day of Service and Convocation is one of the largest collegiate days of service in the country and the only one that combines Convocation, the University's welcome to the academic and residential community with a welcome to civic life and the District of Columbia community. The day draws the entire freshman class along with 175 upper class students as leaders. Students are welcomed by the President, Provost and Deans as well as a student speaker. The message of civic engagement at the Convocation ceremony, including voter participation is strong. In addition to the public message, student leaders plan to talk about voter registration as part of their training and reflection with the smaller student service teams.

The GW ONE Campaign plans to bring the ONE Vote Caravan for a multimedia event designed to highlight the issues of extreme poverty and preventable disease and promote voter participation.

Beginning in August and continuing through the election, Resident Advisors across campus, and particularly in first year residence halls, will use group meetings and bulletin boards to promote voter registration and participation.

Faculty-in-residence coordinated a documentary screening of [The Choice 2016](#) along with a discussion, sponsored by Rock the Vote.

Multiple student organizations plan to host educational panels and events focused on voter participation, including The Organization of Latino Students, which plans to host **Latino Votes: Politics and the Media**, a discussion on the upcoming presidential election and the ways candidates engage the Latino community through the media.

In addition, multiple student organizations, including the GW Democrats, the GW Republicans, and the GW Black Law Students Association, plan to conduct voter information and registration tabling.

Because of GW's unique location and academic interests many public events support voter registration and participation.

GW sponsors numerous public events related to issues of importance in the upcoming Presidential election. Events planned include:

A panel discussion with NBC Washington on [issues that concern millennials](#).

A panel hosted by the School of Media and Public Affairs on [the role of the media](#) in the elections hosted by NBC's Chuck Todd.

A gathering of tech and entrepreneurial representatives from Google, Twitter, Facebook, Uber, Microsoft and Democracy Works to discuss their [companies' election efforts](#) sponsored by the Graduate School of Political Management.

Plans are underway to host panel discussions after each of the Presidential debates with experts from the GW faculty.

GW Republicans plan to sponsor [a talk with conservative commentator S.E. Cupp](#) in October.

Media

GW's official online news source, **GW Today**, which is sent electronically to all GW students, faculty and staff twice a week, plans to highlight political participation and voting as part of its fall coverage.

By highlighting events such as those above, GW Today promotes and supports participation in the election and election coverage. Stories on the presidential [polls](#) and on the panel discussions hosted after each of the [Presidential debates](#) drive greater interest and engagement in voting.

GW's independent student newspaper **The Hatchet** also plans news stories and opinion pieces on the election in order to promote participation.

Social Media

From August through early November, the Nashman Center for Civic Engagement promotes voter registration each week through its newsletter, which reaches more than 4000, and through social media.

Special messages from the Nashman Center are scheduled to encourage students to register and vote beginning in September and repeating across multiple media platforms on a weekly basis through mid –October.