

**#SLSV
#STUDENTVOTE
#ASKEVERYSTUDENT**

ALLEGANY COLLEGE OF MARYLAND

FALL 2022

**ALL IN ONE CAMPUS / STUDENTS LEARN STUDENTS VOTE
PRELIMINARY STUDENT VOTER
REGISTRATION & ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

AT ALLEGANY COLLEGE OF MARYLAND

**Submitted by Diane McMahon, Cornell Johnson,
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and the

**Allegany College of Maryland's
Civic and Community Engagement Committee**

Executive Summary:

Allegany College of Maryland (ACM) is a small community college located in the Appalachian mountains of rural Maryland in the city of Cumberland. Last year we had about 1800 full-time students registered for classes. Due to COVID many classes were offered online, but the bulk of classes were offered face to face following strict guidelines related to keeping our campuses safe. Vaccines are encouraged but are not mandatory.

At ACM, the Civic and Community Engagement Committee (CCEC) committee, the College to Community Partnership Center staff, the Student Government Association, and the Student Voter Registration Ambassadors, oversee voter registration planning and voter engagement activities on campus.

The purpose of this plan is to increase voter registration on our campuses [we have one central campus in Cumberland, MD and a small satellite location in Bedford, PA] to at least 80%, though our stated target remains 100%. Our recent NSLVE report measured voter registration in 2020 to be 61%. This was an 8.1% increase prior to the last report.

Engagement strategies this year will include new and innovative ideas. One is to speak in more classes [depending on COVID restrictions], host a youtube voter talk show led by our “Ask Every Student” Student Voter Registration Ambassadors, attend orientation events and first year experiences, send out a special mailing to all ACM credit students, host special events, hold voter registration drives, launch debate and forum watching parties, share in class voter engagement modules, organize co-curricular and cross-curricular democracy focused dialogue events, give out student and faculty civic engagement awards at the end of the year, and invite our campus-community voter engagement partners [NAACP, LWV, Women’s Action Committee, etc.] to come to campus or join us on zoom to promote their voter education and registration agendas. We are also working with the local election board, to train more students to be voter registration volunteers and poll workers this year.

This past year we were very fortunate to receive an “Ask Every Student” grant - of \$5,000 - to launch our Student Voter Registration Ambassador initiative. This allowed us to hire three student voter registration Ambassadors who will train 30-45 civic engagement activists to support our work to educate and register to vote, every student on our campus. We are applying for a Student Learn Student Vote [SLSV] Co-designer grant in the spring to hopefully continue this initiative into Fall 2022 when the active mid-term election cycle begins again. ACM is an active member of the SLSV coalition.

Leadership:

For the past eight years, ACM has been working to strengthen student voter registration and education as part of our commitment to providing an education in democratic learning and civic engagement to every student on our campus. Our efforts began with cross-curricular activities and expanded to one time events and voter registration initiatives. At the beginning of this journey, we worked with the National Democracy Commitment Initiative [contact” Verdis Robinson], which has since been disbanded. This original collaboration allowed us to join with the NSLVE community - for which we have been reporting to over the past five years to measure our efforts utilizing an external credible source of information to provide dependable data about actual student voting on campus. This past year we earned a “Silver” engagement award from NSLVE for increasing student participation by 8.1% [overall 61%] on campus. Our goal is to increase this to 80% in the year ahead.

ACM’s leadership has been strongly involved with our voter registration efforts. Led by the efforts of Dr. Kurt Hoffman, Sr. Vice President of Instructional Affairs, we have been able to charter a special functions committee that consists of faculty, students and staff working at the college - along with community leaders that join with us on special initiatives. The founding efforts of the college, led by Dr. Hoffman, led to the establishment of our current College to Community Partnership Center, which is facilitated by Dr. Diane McMahan - who is directly responsible for implementing this plan in partnership with our college, student and community leaders. To do this we work closely with the Student Life Direction, Erin Yokum, who coordinates the work of the Student Government Association on Campus. We are also working more closely with our advising office, and the director Jennifer Engelback, to reach every student

that is registered on our campus using their emails, addresses, and texting services made available through our student engagement platforms [ex. Navigate].

Last year, we were able to establish a voting polling place at ACM by working with the local Allegany County Election Board [contact: Diane Lobel] to move a site from an area that was no longer accessible in the city to our campus where free parking and accessible access is available to all citizens and students. The first use of the new polling place will occur in April, at ACM's Continuing Education building, which is also very accessible by bus.

ACM is a certified [2020 Carnegie Classification Community Engagement Campus](#), a member of [Campus Compact - Community College for Democracy](#), a participating member of [NSLVE - Institute for Democracy](#), active with the [ALL-IN-CAMPUS-DEMOCRACY CHALLENGE](#), and an active member in the national [ASK EVERY STUDENT COALITION](#).

We also work closely with our local and state partners which include the local chapter of the [Allegany County Library's Choose Civility Committee](#) [contact: Renee Mason], the [Allegany County Public Schools Service Learning Division](#) [contact: Kara Kennel], the [NAACP #7007](#) [contact: Tifani Fischer], the [Allegany County Women's Action Committee](#) [contact Sarah Parsons], [Frostburg State University](#) [contact Dr. Elesha Ruminski], and the [MD League of Women Voters](#) [contact: Genie Massey]

Commitment:

The ACM community has institutionalized its commitment to voter registration and civic engagement in several ways. For example, civic engagement is explicitly listed in our Educational Strategic Master plan - and "Civic Engagement" is a prioritized goal. Likewise, our college's Strategic Plan promotes the college as an Anchor Institution [Goal 3.1] focusing specifically on student engagement, which includes the activities listed in this voter registration engagement plan. The college has also established a General Education Learning Outcome [GELO] goal that focuses on "Personal and Civic Responsibility" and faculty utilize the voter engagement activities included in this plan to help institutionalize the learning outcome in their syllabuses and classroom curriculum. This coming year we hope to create a D2L module that can easily be inserted into a course for students to do in tandem with this GELO as a required class learning module or for extra credit. The college holds frequent workshops on civic engagement and they also have chosen to lift up this strategic goal by honoring faculty and students with civic engagement awards in All College ceremonies. We have a wall in our Humanities Building on campus that lists all the students that have won this award over the past eight years under the title Allegany College of Maryland's Democracy Commitment.

Landscape:

ACM closely tracks civic engagement efforts, specific to activity, venue, and location. These are recorded by individual faculty members, student organization and club leaders, and our administrative leaders. At the end of each semester - a tracking submission form is sent out to the entire college community to ask them to log in their event titles, # of students, hours served, and community partners. This data is then tracked in an excel spreadsheet and organized to display the number of faculty, student, staff, and community leaders participating - along with hours spent - and events organized. Our college has a deep commitment to the community, which founded it. We make it a point to communicate our efforts to our local, state and national partners - along with our Board of Trustees, and everyone on campus, so they are aware of what is happening and how they might get more involved.

Strategy & Goals:

Currently, this coming year's goals include the following:

Voter registration outreach efforts will begin in the **classroom**, extend to **residential life**, occur within **extra-curricular** [be it online or in person] **programming**, and in **major campus events**, as well as in **minute processes** like **campus ID pick-up**.

We will also offer voter education for faculty to integrate into their classes with presentations offered by our three *Student Voter Registration Ambassadors* who will in turn recruit a 30-45 student *civic engagement volunteer team*, to support one-on-one, peer-to-peer, outreach efforts at *Allegheny College of Maryland*.

We will engage our civic engagement volunteer team in Volunteer Registration training which is required by the state of Maryland for individuals that are assisting with voter registration events.

The volunteers will work with Ambassadors and assigned ACM staff to complete their voter registration goals. In spring-summer 2022, Ambassadors will focus on recruitment and preparation for FALL 2022, and on building and strengthening the *ACM voter engagement coalition, which will include community organizations that assist with voter registration in Allegany County, MD*.

We will host several events in Fall 2022, including, but not limited to Student Orientation days, RA Trainings, Constitution Day, National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day. As the state of Maryland allows voter registration up to and including Election Day, we will be able to continue to help students register and update their registrations as necessary through each of these Civic Holidays and on Election Day. We will continue to offer voter registration information in the spring.

Our overall goal is to ensure that we “**ask every student**” if they are registered to vote, and to provide the assistance that they need to do so. Although we strive for 100% voter registration, we hope to reach 80%.

In the end, we will work to reach **1,400 students or more** (at least 80% of ACM students). We will primarily use **Vote.org** - or **Rockthevote.org** - along with internet connected laptops - to assist students to register to vote if needed. Students will also have the option to use cell phones. Follow up will occur with every student contacted as possible. Our next NSLVE report will help us determine if we have reached our goal.

NSLVE:

- Below is information from our most recent NSLVE report. The following data will help guide us as we plan interactions with faculty and students this coming year.

Anticipated Challenges:

The past two years with COVID have resulted in changing forms of engagement to protect our students, faculty, staff and community partners from the inherent dangers of COVID. That is why most of last year's initiatives were based online. To stay up to date on the changing voting environment, we will promote <https://alerts.howto.vote> so students can find out what their state is doing to safeguard the upcoming elections. Other social media apps that quickly connect students to the information that they need to know about voting will be promoted.

Reporting:

ACM reports yearly on our activities to the Board of Trustees, the college community, and our local community. The results include # of events, # of participants - including break outs of students, employees, and community members. Each event is detailed with a description of what occurred. Likewise we track the level of involvement in the activity - showing if it was reflected or reported on in class - and if it was a one time or ongoing effort. Our NSLVE report - provides more detailed information about demographics, and is listed above. We will continue to participate in NSLVE to receive this excellent data which will help us plan our future events.

Evaluation of Goals:

Evaluation is ongoing and is used to guide our efforts. We use the following evaluation and assessment instruments to ensure quality improvement.

- We will evaluate our progress by reviewing the results of our [NSLVE](#) report and incorporating what we learn into our planning efforts.
- We will also utilize feedback from an [NASCE](#) assessment that students complete via a survey conducted by Siena College. The last time the NASCE was conducted was in the spring of this past year. The next assessment will not occur until Spring 2023. We have received very detailed reports from Siena College which are reviewed in our Civic and

Community Engagement committee meetings and then used to develop our future planning efforts.

- We will also continue to complete the [CCSSE](#) assessment on campus with a large percentage of the student population.

This information is reviewed by the Senior Vice President of Instructional Affairs, Dr. Kurt Hoffman, and presented to the President's Action Team [PAT] which ensures that the data is available and integrated into the Strategic Plan and Educational Master Plan. These two documents guide all programming efforts at our college, which connect to our program directors, and the faculty that they work with.

Submitted by Dr. Diane McMahon, Faculty Director - College of Community Partnership Center and the Chair of the Civic and Community Engagement Committee.