



California State University, San Bernardino

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# **Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan**



## Summary

Under its current mission, California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) ensures student learning and success, conducts research, scholarly and creative activities, and is actively engaged in the vitality of the local region. CSUSB cultivates the professional, ethical, and intellectual development of its students, faculty and staff so they thrive and contribute to a globally connected society.

CSUSB will achieve its goal of becoming a premiere institution for voter engagement and remain committed to helping young Americans become active and confident political citizens by implementing its own Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan. Its plan will build on current civic engagement strengths that are facilitated by various offices at our institution, providing a cross-divisional effort around civic empowerment and education for the student body. Current offices that are doing the work of civic engagement are:

- Associated Students, Inc.
- Office of Community Engagement
- Office of Government & Community Relations

These departments will work on creating a working group of other staff and students that will put forth programming, communication and education efforts around civic empowerment. In-person and digital efforts will be aimed to the students of both San Bernardino and Palm Desert Campuses, regardless of voter status, to ensure that each student knows how they can be active and contribute civically to their communities.



# Leadership

The Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan for Cal State San Bernardino for this year was developed by the following individuals:

- **Herbert Gonzalez, *Associated Students, Inc.***
  - Works with students and campus partners to promote civic engagement to the student body and ensures efforts around campus are cohesive. Works on marketing material and promotional efforts around civic engagement.
- **Camelia Fowler, *Office of Community Engagement***
  - Ensures that efforts are being brought forth for important dates such as National Voter Registration Day, Voter Education Week, and Election Day. Cam also works on communication and outreach to the campus community to increase visibility of efforts to students.
- **Maral Hernandez, *Office of Government and Community Relations***
  - Serves as a resource and liaison between campus and the community partners. Works to provide non-partisan organizations and/or resources that can come to campus to facilitate workshops around voter engagement.
- **Dr. Brian Heisterkamp, *Office of Community Engagement***
  - Serves as the Academic Affairs representative to ensure that efforts are cohesive
- **Ashley Smith, *Associated Students, Inc.***
  - Serves as the Director of External Affairs, and student representative of the group. She leads civic programming and marketing efforts in ASI, implementing fun and interactive ways to distribute education and information.

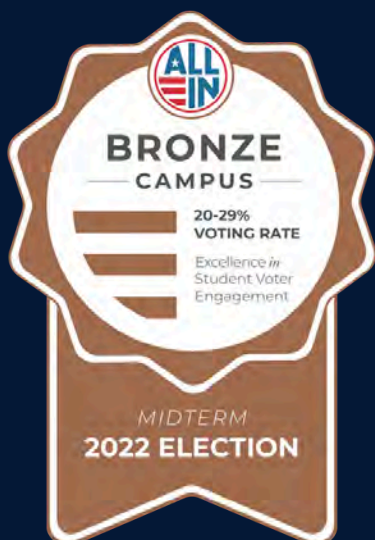


## Leadership *(continued)*

Departments that have contributed to civic engagement efforts in the past two years have been:

- Office of Student Leadership and Engagement
- Santos Manuel Student Union
- Housing & Residential Education
- Office of Strategic Communication
- Undocumented Student Success Center
- Rancho Mirage Student Center at the Palm Desert Campus
- Division of Student Affairs

All of these departments and individuals are students or work closely with students. The wide range of perspectives has led to efforts that effectively convey the importance of voter registration and civic engagement through fun and interactive programming and marketing.



## Landscape

Cal State University, San Bernardino won a Bronze Seal from the **ALL IN** Campus Democracy Challenge based on the 2022 midterm election voting rate from the NSLVE Report. According to the report, CSUSB had a **20-29%** voting rate.

# Reflection

Over the past two years, CSUSB focused on three areas to maintain a strong civically engaged presence on campus: **Campuswide Communication, Digital Outreach, & Educational Programming**

## 2022

In 2022, we had approximately 115 students register to vote, and up until September of 2024, we have had an additional 32 more (according to the Ballot Bowl archives). During the past two academic years, we have held various events and opportunities to allow students to learn more about civic engagement and voter education.

In 2022, Associated Students, Inc. launched the “**Voice Your Choice**” campaign to encourage students to register to vote. Voice Your Choice has been the running slogan for the past two years (and currently) to establish a brand with current and incoming students. Through the Voice Your Choice campaign in Fall 2022, CSUSB hosted two large-scale events and smaller tabling events to help promote civic engagement to students:



- On Tuesday, September 20, 2022, ASI and other campus partners hosted a **Civic Engagement Fair** at the San Bernardino Campus, bringing together various departments, clubs, and organizations to host different non-partisan activities. This helped educate students about the election, registering to vote, and breakdown of the ballot in a “stamp card” system. Students were required to check out a certain number of boba stations and after that, turned in their stamp card to receive a free treat or meal. Approximately 219 students attended the event.
- On Thursday, September 22, 2022, ASI provided a smaller, similar version of the event at the Palm Desert Campus. Approximately 54 students attended the event and received a free treat or meal. Both events had resources on ways to register to vote, what to look out for in the ballot, and ways to be civically engaged if you are not able to vote. This allowed all students to be welcomed and included in the efforts and encouraged participation and helpful conversations.



Throughout September and October 2022, ASI, Community Engagement, Student Leadership and Engagement, and Government Relations worked to spread cohesive messaging across campus. Digital communication was a key factor in this: email, social media, digital screens across campus, and more.



# Reflection *(continued)*

## 2023

In 2023, CSUSB's efforts focused on programming and marketing. ASI and partners launched the "Voice Your Choice" campaign for Fall 2024. Emails were sent out September and October to the student body to encourage them to register to vote. ASI and Office of Community Engagement (OCE) had two tabling events on September 18th and 19th, 2023. Students were able to meet with representatives from ASI, OCE, and the Registrar of Voters from both San Bernardino and Riverside, and registered to vote on the spot or learned how to register to vote. They were also handed information on important dates and other events to look out for.

For Vote Early Day, ASI and OCE did two more tabling events at San Bernardino and Palm Desert. These events were held on October 24th (SB) and October 26th (PDC).

During Voter Education Week in October 2023, ASI and OCE also did classroom presentations to USTD courses in effort to target first year students who were taking the "Freshmen Seminar" class. Two presentations were held through Zoom on October 2nd and 4th, and both presentations had students asking questions about the "Voice Your Choice" efforts and how to register to vote.

Both years, CSUSB had a ballot drop off location, which has remained in the same spot as previous years (by the main entrance of our campus). This location makes it easy for students to find but also to drive to it if they are coming to or leaving campus. This location makes it easy to swing by and drop the ballot without the burden of parking or campus traffic.

Through the duration of efforts for both years, CSUSB saw more traffic in the 2022 events as there was a midterm election coming up. Having an active "coalition" helped the efforts of 2022 be both program and marketing heavy, while the 2023 efforts were focused more on digital marketing and classroom outreach.



# Reflection *(continued)*

## Partners

Campus partners that we worked with over the past two years (and plan to work with again in 2024) include:

- Office of Student Leadership and Engagement
- Office of Community Engagement
- Office of Government and Community Relations
- Santos Manuel Student Union
- Department of Housing & Residential Education
- Undocumented Student Success Center
- Rancho Mirage Student Center (Palm Desert Campus)
- Coyote Radio
- Recreation and Wellness
- Division of Student Affairs
- Division of Academic Affairs
- San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters
- Riverside County Registrar of Voters

These partnerships were and continue to be instrumental in conveying a cohesive and encouraging message



# Goals

For this academic year, CSUSB is going to continue with the “Voice Your Choice” campaign since it is a well-known campaign amongst students and the campus community. CSUSB will focus on continuing the partnerships with the departments listed on this plan and expand its coalition to reach more students.

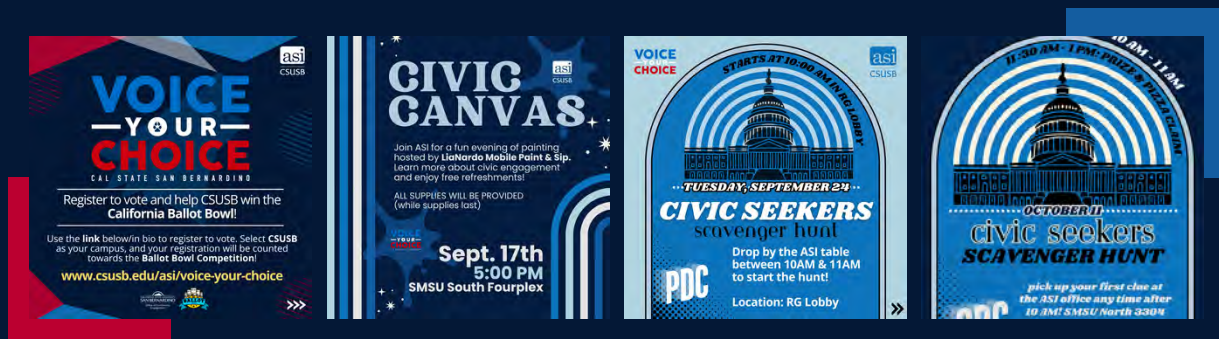
**Webpage:** ASI has developed a webpage that will serve as the platform for civic empowerment and voter information. The developed website includes:

- Voter Registration Information with the Ballot Bowl Link
- Link to San Bernardino County of Registrar of Voters
- Link to Riverside County of Registrar of Voters
- Links to Polling Locations
- Election and Voter Registration Dates
- Proposition Information
- Calendar of Events



## Short Term Goals:

- Provide 2-3 more creative, engaging, and educational events so students can learn about civic engagement. **(Fall 2024)**
- Work with coalition and student groups to rebrand the civic engagement slogan and campaign to capture current students' engagement **(AY 2025-2026)**
- Maintain and continuously promote a resourceful, interactive, one-stop shop civic engagement webpage that students can access anytime of the year **(Fall 2024)**
- Expand the invitation to faculty senate, college deans, and other campus divisions to provide cohesive efforts **(AY 2025-26)**
- Have resources and education available at classrooms and all big Fall events at CSUSB (Late Night, The Coyote Experience, Homecoming, etc.) **(AY 2025-26)**
- During the first month of each academic semester, develop and distribute campus-wide emails to students, faculty and staff providing civic and election dates and information **(Fall 2024)**.





## Goals *(continued)*

### Long Term Goals

- Reach a voter registration of 1000+ students at CSUSB
- Establish two signature programs that happen every academic year that focus on civic empowerment and voter registration.
- Gather and assess feedback from CSUSB students by creating focus groups that inquire about challenges or barriers faced when it comes to registering to vote or being civically engaged.
- Work with other universities and colleges around the area to establish a regional coalition and offer resources/events to students around the Inland Empire, Coachella Valley and High Desert.

CSUSB is committed to establishing a well-rounded coalition that is composed of various campus partners (students, staff and faculty) and divisions to ensure synergy in efforts, empowerment, and education on civic and voter engagement.



# Events

## Events (AY 2024-25)

- **Civic Canvas | Tuesday, September 17, 2024 | 5:00 – 7:00 PM**
  - Students will be able to learn about civic engagement and the importance of voting while painting a picture of empowerment in a fun “paint & sip” setting. LiaNardo Mobile Painting - will be facilitating the painting session. Jesse Malgar, Former Press and Communication Director for the Secretary of State – will be connecting with students while they paint on the importance of civic engagement.
- **Voter Registration Info Table w/ San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters**
- **Voter Registration Info Table w/ Riverside County Registrar of Voters**
  - **Tuesday, September 17, 2024 | 11:30 – 1:00 PM**
  - Office of Community Engagement will be tabling with the San Bernardino County and Riverside County Registrar of Voters during university hours to connect with students at both campuses.
- **Civic Seekers at San Bernardino | Friday, October 11, 2024 | 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**
- **Civic Seekers at Palm Desert | Tuesday, September 24, 2024 | 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**
  - Students will be part of an interactive, campus-wide scavenger hunt which will involve riddles and clues around voting and the election. Offices from our list of partners will serve as stops for the clues. The first 10 students to complete the scavenger hunt will receive an exclusive prize. After the scavenger hunt, all students are invited to join ASI for a “voter simulation” in which they will be given a mock ballot, and a space to complete it (just like the polls), and members from the team and campus partners will guide them through the process.
- **Voter Education Week (October 7th to October 11th)**
  - OCE and ASI will be doing campus presentations to first-year seminar courses (USTD) in person and virtually. This will encourage students (who are eligible) to register to vote, while also promoting the Civic Seekers event. Flyers, stickers, and other goodies are planned to be handed out during these presentations.

# Events *(continued)*

## Events (AY 2025-26)

- Civic Seekers at San Bernardino and Palm Desert (Fall 2025)
  - Given the layers of interaction of this event, and gauging its success once it happens, CSUSB plans to bring it back to campus for Fall 2025
- Civic Engagement Fair (Fall 2025)
  - Given this event's success in 2022, CSUSB plans to bring it back to learn and build community.
- Civic Empowerment Conference (October 2025)
  - Provide a half-day conference to students with different workshops conveying the message to all students, regardless of registration status) to be civically engaged. The conference will include panels from members of the community and campus (non-partisan) and activities to help guide first time voters through the process.

