

# 2022 Colorado Mountain College Campus Vote Plan

## Summary

Colorado Mountain College is committed to fostering student civic engagement by working across our various campuses to create and institutionalize an integrated, concerted push for student voter registration and election participation. Our unique institutional makeup of 11 separate mountain campuses means that CMC faces different challenges compared to other 2-year institutions when working to bridge access to our democracy.

Mountain communities are unique places that our campus communities take pride in – our students have a wide range of opportunities to innovate, connect to our rich environments, and work to build sustainable futures. Mountain communities also face more barriers to accessing voter registration and Voter Service Centers as compared to suburban and urban communities, due to geography and smaller pockets of population density. Mountain communities are also reached less by organizations and groups providing voter registration services. Additionally, many of our programs span STEM fields, and engaging STEM students in democracy presents its own set of challenges. Research shows that STEM fields have lower voting rates historically. The majority of our campuses are commuter campuses. Lastly, young people, and specifically young people of color, are underrepresented in the electorate due to specific systemic barriers; as a designated Hispanic-serving institution, we are committed to understanding and addressing these barriers.

As we work to create a cross-campus integrated institutional effort to increase student participation and bridge these gaps, our intention is to work to build and sustain programs and initiatives that work for all our campus communities, bringing professionals from each campus to the table and holding ourselves accountable to building up this important work together.

Efforts are primarily being driven by staff at our Spring Valley Campus; our goal is to more deeply engage in collaborative efforts across all CMC campuses, beginning with the 2022 election and stretching into longer term growth.

### **Our current leadership team**

Jen Brennan, College Counselor, Student Affairs  
Andrea Caruso, College Counselor, Student Affairs  
Jen Besser, College Counselor, Student Affairs  
Susan Proper, Community Member Summit County, Election Lawyer  
Brian Barker, Marketing Director, Central Services  
Windy Selig, Leadville Staff and Faculty  
Diana Sherr, Staff Edwards Campus  
Janelle Cook, Director of Financial Aid

This plan is an overview of how we will approach civic engagement in 2022.

### **Point of Contact**

Jen Brennan, MA, LPC  
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## Commitments

CMC has signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation, and is an eager participant in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

## Goals, strategies and tactics

### Goal: Foster 2022 student voter registration

Strategies and tactics:

- Internal resource page for students containing student-friendly and accurate voter registration information and a link to the CO Secretary of State's online voter registration portal
- Outward facing website will communicate the Presidential Commitment and link to CO Secretary of State's online voter registration portal
- Financial Aid office sends Bi-annual emails to students encouraging them to register to vote, and informing them of the recent March 2022 implementation of full online voter registration access regardless of Colorado ID status (passed in the 2021 Colorado Votes Act)
- Two work study positions requested dedicated to GOTV efforts Fall 2022
- In-person voter registration and voter education efforts at Spring Valley campus and other campus locations
  - Engage community partners, including New Era Colorado, in voter registration efforts on our residential campuses (Spring Valley, Leadville and Steamboat)
  - Conduct a big voter registration push for National Voter Registration Day (Sept. 20)
  - Execute events such as film screenings, debates, lecture series, etc (work study position to work on this)
- Incorporate voter registration and education into virtual events
- Engage teaching faculty to integrate online voter registration in their classrooms
- Integrate voter registration into Spring Valley campus in-person orientation (August 19 + 20) to reach ~150 students by hosting a session on civic engagement that includes online voter registration. Emphasize the rights of students who moved from out-of-state to register and vote in CO
- Spring Valley classroom visits to share voter data to first semester students in How to be Successful in College Workshop. Info on upcoming election, how to register, dates, how to vote, understanding ballot
- Engage student life at our 3 residential campuses in voter registration (clubs, RAs, student government association)
  - Partner with New Era Colorado to host a Zoom call prior to National Voter Registration Day with a variety of student leaders to get them trained on engaging peers in online voter registration and tabling

**Goal: Foster 2022 student voter turnout by ensuring as many students as possible receive their ballots in the mail and are able to cast them, and work with students who didn't receive a ballot in the mail to vote in-person**

Strategies and tactics:

- Once ballots begin getting mailed out (October 17), email blast all students with accurate, student friendly voting information, including how to vote by mail, how to locate your nearest Voter Service Center or ballot dropbox, and other important FAQs
  - Emphasize the ability to register/ update voter registration online by Mon. Oct. 31 and still receive a ballot in the mail
  - Emphasize the rights of students who moved from out-of-state to register and vote in CO
- Leverage social media to continue our "Why I Am Voting" campaign, including a promo video; post a pro-voting statement from admin on website
- In-person voter turnout efforts
  - Tabling; engage community members as volunteers to collect and deliver 10 ballots per person to address access, in line with applicable CO election laws
  - Shuttle for in-person voting on Nov. 7th. From Spring Valley
- TBD: Host virtual ballot parties and/or engage student leaders in hosting ballot parties

**Goal: Work to build and institutionalize a permanent cross-campus collaborative effort to foster student civic engagement**

Strategies and tactics:

- Leadership team leverages Spring Valley programming to set an example for other campuses - hosting meetings to engage other campuses in our model, best practices, and next steps to integrate these initiatives into their campuses
  - Engage CMC President in bringing campuses to the table
- Use 2022 NSLVE data to build a basis for understanding CMC student voter registration and turnout in non-presidential major election years
- Improve our demographic collection to assist our data analysis of how student demographics intersect with voter registration and election access
  - Authorize NSLVE to use our demographic data
  - Engage individual campuses on systematizing the collection of this information
- Engage student life (clubs, RAs, student gov't association) to build student civic engagement leadership