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Voter Engagement Plan

Executive Summary

At Independence Community College (ICC), civic and democratic engagement are foundational principles on which the College will continue to build a bright future. Through a complete change in campus leadership, the College has reinvested in the civic engagement principles it was founded on over 100 years ago. Our Student Life Department at ICC establishes the majority of our campus-wide activities, so it was a natural fit for the Student Life division of the Student Affairs Department to take on the task of voter engagement.

Student Life is not only the hub for students to foster connections across campus but also to find enrichment and expand their worldviews. ICC is home to a broad spectrum of students, with a campus population built on a local, national, and even international student base. Having a vastly varied campus encourages our students to embrace a growth mindset. Through this plan we seek to apply that desire for growth in a way that helps students learn to embrace their civic responsibilities.

Our faculty and staff at Independence Community College strive to care for the whole student, not just academics. Part of that includes helping students learn how to become informed voters who understand that their voices matter. Our current ICC President, Dr. Vincent Bowhay, pioneered this plan during his role as Vice President of Student Affairs. We will continue to honor President Bowhay's work, supported by an extensive framework of individuals encompassing faculty, athletic coaches, university administration, and community partners. We will continue to foster these partnerships, our investment in voter registration resources, and educational materials to further prepare our students to contribute to their communities.

Embedding this work in the Division of Student Affairs has been essential to the success of this program. Foundations to our work include providing access to voter registration at key events including orientation and move-in, continuing contracts, and investments in programs like TurboVote, and transitioning national election days to a virtual class setting to encourage students to go to the polls and vote on election day. This season we will look to expand upon

this by increasing student access opportunities to voter education, voter registration, and exposure to election outcomes.

We look forward to comparing our previous NSLVE data to upcoming data. We will use this information to set more concrete goals moving forward related to voter participation upon receiving a new report for comparison.

2022 Focus Areas

Independence Community College is committed to helping students increase civic engagement through voter registration, voter education, and voter participation. To accomplish these three goals, Independence Community College is committed to the following

- 1) Integrate TurboVote as ICC's one-stop shop for voter registration.
 - a. ICC will continue to contract with TurboVote for voter registration during the Fall 2022 semester.
 - b. TurboVote will be prominently featured on the ICC webpage and a voter landing page will be created.
 - c. TurboVote will be featured throughout campus and integrated into the college experience course.
 - d. Along with our virtual student pantry sign in form, a TurboVote tab will remain open on that computer so that it is accessible to students year-round
 - e. Providing a computer for students to access TurboVote during Constitution Day and National Voter Registration Day.

- 2) Secure accurate college voter information.
 - a. ICC will continue to be a registered campus with the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to benchmark voter registration initiatives.
 - b. When possible, ICC will participate in local, state, and national efforts to track college student voter registration and turnout.
 - c. Strive to have at least 50% of our SGA students registered to vote, for all who are eligible to vote
 - d. Include a survey question as part of our Pirate Pantry sign for the first month of each Fall and Spring semester to track whether students have registered to vote or require assistance registering.
 - e. ICC will improve our registration rate from 59% in 2020 to at least 62% on the next NSLVE report

- 3) Create cross-campus collaborations to promote voter registration, education, and engagement.
 - a. Incorporate voter registration and education initiatives into our campus strategic planning activities.
 - b. Provide resources for students to become or remain educated voters.

- c. Faculty, staff, and students will be encouraged to participate in voter registration drives & Constitution Day, and National Voter Registration Day.
- d. Student Affairs will partner with Academic Affairs to have national election days as virtual class only days to encourage more students to utilize their time to vote.
- e. Posting local and national election outcomes on campus.
- f. ICC will keep a QR Code posted in our student pantry (referred to on campus as our Pirate Pantry) that directs students to an Election Calendar, so they are aware of upcoming election dates.

Commitment

Independence Community College continues to incorporate civic engagement initiatives like the three listed in this plan into the campus strategic plan. Civic Responsibility is a stated general education outcome at ICC, which states students “will be able to develop a civic identity that promotes the quality of life in a community.”

Landscape

ICC has hosted voter registration drives and get out the vote efforts during previous election cycles in conjunction with our local elected officials. The campus has also participated in Constitution Day annually, which is federally mandated.

Independence Community College continues to focus on growing service-learning and civic responsibility initiatives, giving students a hands-on learning experience with real world implications.

The campus also recently re-chartered the Student Government Association. These student leaders continue to contribute to the solid democratic foundation being built on campus.

ICC is proud to launch initiatives like TurboVote this year to help students navigate the complexities of voter registration no matter where they are. Leadership Voter engagement initiatives are coordinated and executed primarily through the Division of Student Affairs at ICC. Cross-divisional efforts have yielded tremendous results and buy-in. We presently have representation from a wide variety of areas, including:

- Student Affairs
- Student Government Association
- Athletics
- Residential Life
- Admissions and Advising
- Library
- Academic Affairs
- Phi Theta Kappa
- Academic Success Center