Campus Voter Engagement Plan 2020
Marywood University

Civic and community engagement are extremely important to Marywood University and are represented in our Mission and Core Values. Pacers to the Polls was the beginning of a movement that began during the Fall 2019 semester, and has since generated a lot of buzz around campus. This project has been spearheaded by Marywood's Office of Student Engagement, and has produced an interest in other departments, which led to the creation of the Pacers to the Polls Task Force. This voter engagement plan was developed by the task force, which has representation from many areas of the campus community: students, faculty, and staff.

The Pacers to the Polls movement has multiple areas of focus, including: emphasis on historically marginalized groups, promotion of the option to register locally, sharing information about when and where to vote, offering voter registration drives, working voter registration into already established mediums, encouraging students to understand and research political stances, understanding the barriers to student voting and relieving as many as we can, and coordination of Election Day awareness through programming.

The plan will be implemented by current leadership (see Leadership) and will likely expand over time to include new departments, individual staff and faculty members, as well as incoming students.

"Marywood University prepares students to seek sustainable solutions for the common good and educates global citizens to live responsibly in an interdependent world."

-Marywood University Mission Statement

Leadership

Voter engagement work at Marywood University is coordinated and executed primarily through the Office of Student Engagement and the Pacers to the Polls Task Force. The program is led by a committee that is composed of students, faculty, and staff. This group meets monthly to share ideas, collaborate on projects, and continue to work on breaking down voting barriers.

Students

Alexis Palys, Student Government President (undergraduate student)
Austen Miller, Student Government Representative (undergraduate student)
Madison Howell, Student Government Representative (undergraduate student)
Paige Bechtle, Student Engagement Social Media Graduate Assistant (graduate student)

*Leadership for students will change based on yearly election and hiring cycles.

Faculty

Dr. Adam Shprintzen, Assistant Professor of Social Science
Dr. Chris Speicher, Associate Professor in the School of Business and Global Innovation

Staff

Michael Kalage, Director of Student Engagement
Ross Novak, Dean of Students
Sherry Frable, Public Relations Specialist
Patrick Cowley, Assessment Coordination & Communication Specialist
Jay Monahan, Assistant Director of Sports Information
Dr. Yerodin Lucas, Director of Institutional Equity & Inclusion and Title IX Coordinator
Haleigh Zurek, Assistant Director for Campus Programming

Presidential Commitment

Sr. Mary Persico, the president of Marywood University, has committed her leadership and support to the Pacers to the Polls movement. She commits to aiding the committee with fully engaging students in all elections and voting related learning opportunities. This signed agreement makes a statement that Sr. Mary Persico is dedicated to full student voter participation, and, by making this visible, encourages the campus community to commit themselves to democratic engagement.

 "The All In Challenge encourages college campuses across the nation to help students form habits of active and informed citizenship and establish democratic participation on their campus. Now, more than ever, it is vital for young people to take part in their civic duties and vote! By joining this challenge, Marywood University has committed to inform the students on our campus why participation in our democracy is so important and how our vote counts. We hope to provide information sessions and other events and resources for students to gain more awareness so they no longer wonder, "Does my vote matter?" By working together we can create a more democratically engaged community, empowering our students to achieve their full potential just as our core values state."

-Sr. Mary Persico, *President, Marywood University*
-Alexis Palys, *President, Marywood University Student Government Association*

Marywood University Guidelines for Political Activities

Marywood University encourages students, faculty and staff to be politically active, recognizing that political activity is an important expression of citizenship. The University supports and encourages the free exchange of ideas related to all issues and individuals' decisions to support causes and candidates of their choosing.

As a tax-exempt, charitable institution, however, the University is subject to the relevant rules and regulations of the Internal Revenue Code that prohibit universities from participating in any political campaign or partisan political activity. Related Federal Election Commission regulations also place other limitations on political activity at educational institutions.

Political Candidates and Campaigns

Students, faculty and staff are free to express their individual and collective political views, so long as it is clear they do not speak or write for or in the name of Marywood University. A registered student organization may not endorse a particular candidate and neither the University's name nor logo may appear on any materials used for or intended to support a particular candidate or campaign. Political programs on campus may be sponsored only by an individual, organization or department from the University community. Any campus appearance of a candidate for political office must be only for an educational or informational purpose. The event must not be conducted as a campaign rally and the moderator should indicate clearly that neither the sponsoring University entity nor the University supports or opposes the candidate(s).

During such programs, representatives of political parties may distribute materials directly related to the issues being discussed, but individual political candidates may not be promoted. Program planners must ensure that all sides of a dialog have equal opportunity for presentation and discussion during the same event. Campaign solicitations and campaign fundraising activities may not be held on University property. This prohibition extends to the posting or transmission of campaign materials by or through any University communication network.

Funds for political candidates or campaigns may not be solicited in the name of the University or on the campus. Members of the community are

encouraged to participate in programs that enable students to register to vote. The Dean of Students provides information on voter registration and the process to conduct such drives.

Use of University Facilities and Resources

University facilities and resources may not be used by or on behalf of an outside organization or individual whose purpose is to further the cause of a particular candidate or political party. University communications systems, including but not limited to phone, internet, e-mail and campus mail may not be used to support or oppose a particular political candidate and no University funds may be used to support any politically partisan activity, including services or materials. If a program will include candidates for public office and/or current or former or group; materials that support a particular candidate or a single side of an issue are not permissible and may not be posted.

Political office holders and/or the program organizers should notify the Marketing Office well in advance of the program.

Related Policies

All activities and events which meet the above criteria are also subject to the policies and regulations related to hosting speakers, scheduling events, posting materials and other event logistics. Advertisements for such educational, political programs on campus must comply with the posters/fliers/signage policy published in the student clubs/organizations handbook. The Director of Student Engagement or his/her designee must review and approve such materials prior to posting. Promotional materials must include a program description and contact information of the sponsoring individual.

The NSLVE Report

Marywood University participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE). The Pacers to the Polls Task Force is hoping to gain the following information, in order to develop adequate and achievable goals: voter registration statistics, information about voter education, as well as voter turnout statistics. Once this information is released, we aim to make our goals specific, measureable, achievable, relative, timely, inclusive, and equitable.

For this purpose, the Pacers to the Polls committee will set targets & goals based on the National 2012-2016 National NSLVE Report.

Insert Marywood NSLVE data once received

Goals

Focus Areas

- Achieve voter registration rate **85%** in 2020
  - In 2016, Marywood University's student registration rate was 81%, and 76.1% in 2018
- Aim to increase voter registration by **2%** every 2 years
- Achieve voter participation rate **80%** in 2020
  - In 2016, the Marywood University student turn out of registered voters was 72.3%, and 51.4% in 2018
- Enhance resources to ensure students make informed choices on Election Day
- Assess barriers to student voting and remove when possible

Strategies

Programming

- Programming funding comes directly from the Student Government Association
- Pacers to the Polls hosted a campus wide event for National Voter Registration Day on September 22nd
    - 21 students registered to vote for the first time, dozens more checked or updated their registration
    - Pacers to the Polls handed out free branded cookies, shirts, and masks
- Vote Early Day (10/20) was hosted to teach students their options for voting early, how to return their mail-in ballot, and voting safely in person. Heavy emphasis was on voting by mail
- Pacers to the Polls Week of Action (10/20-10-24) included an event titled "She Resisted- Honoring the Suffragettes" to highlight the women who altered history
- Promoted and hosted events featuring local politicians (with a focus on major issues)
    - On October 23rd, Marywood Pacers to the Polls participated in Vote Together, ran by Mayor Cognetti, When We All Vote, Royals Vote (The University of Scranton), and the Black Scranton project.
- Emphasized virtual programming in light of COVID-19
- Work with SGA to recommend the cancellation of classes on Election Day
    - Pacers to the Polls will adopt resolutions from all Senates & SGA in an attempt to cancel classes
        - Gain Cabinet support
        - Introduce to Policy Committee
        - Introduce to Strategic Planning Committee
        - Presidential and Board of Trustees Involvement
- The following student groups held their own engagement programs: Student Government Association, History Society, SAGA, Environmental club, Honors Program, Greek organizations, National Society of Leadership & Success, Student Athlete Advisory Committee, & the School of Social Work
- Pacers to the Polls incentivized attendance at educational events
    - Sign in/prove attendance for bonus points, etc
    - Incentives included food, branded shirts, masks, key chains and cash prizes!

Social Media: @MarywoodSGA

- Marywood's President and Student Government Association President sent out a campus wide email regarding the importance of voting
- Participated in a campus wide pledge to vote campaign (ALL IN to Vote)
    - For fall 2020, ads had been posted multiple times per week on both Facebook and Instagram
    - The pledge to vote campaign was integrated into unrelated events on campus, an example being: a grab and go puzzle giveaway also included slips of paper with the pledging website

- Create a Social Media Campaign for National Voter Registration Day
- Student Government Association hosted a social media campaign to encourage students to register to vote
    - "I voted early" stickers/hashtag to gain popularity
    - "How to" cheat sheets for registering, finding your polling place handouts for events and social media posts

Voter Education

- Pacers to the Polls hosted a Voter Education Week October 5th-9th. Each day of the week had a different theme and taught students about registering to vote, voting by mail, creating a voting plan, learning what's on your ballot, and getting your friends & family involved in the process
- Informed students of their home state voting laws, with a particular focus on Pennsylvania's voting laws

- Offered multiple educational session each semester, with hopes that programming introduces students to the current issues, as well as voter registration, absentee ballots, polling places, and laws
- Created and printed flyers to post around campus about upcoming elections
- Offered support to help those with barriers to voting
- Emphasized the opportunity to work as a poll worker, with the possibility of a poll location at Marywood (we ultimately decided against this due to COVID concerns)
- Can/can't sheet to any student groups participating in these programs/hosting their own programs

- Promoted free ride options to voting places to students
- Provided links and resources to help with voter registration on the following: Moodle, the Marywood app, our website, social media, This Week at Marywood
- Dean of Students, Ross Novak, sends out an email at the beginning of each semester containing information about: voter registration, polling places, absentee ballots, and more.

Constitution Day

Constitution Day programming is hosted out of the Social Sciences Department at Marywood University. Typically, the program has fallen into the hands of Assistant Professor of History and Honors Program Director, Adam Shprintzen, Ph.D. In the past, programming surrounding Constitution Day has been as simple as handing out a quiz in all History courses. Since then, the events have transformed into guest lectures, trivia nights, and voter registration drives. Marywood University abides by the PATRIOT Act, which was passed shortly following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. To remain eligible for Title IV funding, Higher Education Institutions must offer educational programs annually on September 17th, Constitution Day.

Voter Registration

- Had student-driven efforts to register voters in the Scranton community

    o Vote Together Day (10/23) was hosted with Mayor Cognetti's office to get those in the community involved and registered to vote. Marywood's Pacers to the Polls attended and aided in promotion of the event and registration of community members.

- Incorporated voter registration information on the Marywood University app
- Incorporated voter registration information at popular, yet unrelated, events on campus

- Incorporated voter registration at New Student Orientation and Transfer Orientation
- Twice a year, the Office of Student Engagement will have/had a Voter Registration table at the highly attended Involvement Fair

- o Fast facts/misperceptions handouts will be available; there are plans to expand this information/handouts at the upcoming fair
- o This information is aimed at students primarily living in Pennsylvania, but also includes information about registering and voting in other states.
  - Student Engagement added voter registration links to SGA ballots, NSLS applications, etc.
- Student Engagement emailed all club leaders with voter registration information and the option to host their own events
- Census 2020 involvement included:
  - o Social media campaign
  - o Advertising of census jobs
  - o Email to students from Ross Novak, Dean of Students

Reporting

We will be sharing the outcomes to both internal and external outlets, such as:
- Marywood University's Outcomes Assessment Committee
- The Wood Word (Marywood University's newspaper)
- Local media (FOX56, WNEP, Times Leader)
- The Marywood University website (where the plan will reside and be the most updated; as well as accessible to the public)

Evaluation

GOAL	MEASURE
Achieve voter registration rate 85% in 2020	Assess data based on the NSLVE report
Aim to increase voter registration by 2% every 2 years	Assess data based on the NSLVE report
Achieve voter participation rate 80% in 2020	Assess data based on the NSLVE report
Enhance resources to ensure students make informed choices on Election Day	Student-driven assessment to determine satisfaction and satisfaction with resources
Access barriers to student voting and remove when possible	Student-driven assessment to determine barriers and evaluation of NSLVE report to determine if our efforts are effective

*Data will be updated based on NSLVE data as it becomes available to Marywood University