



# Democratic Engagement Plan 2018

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**SVSU Center for Community Engagement**

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***"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."***

**-Margaret Mead**

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# Executive Summary

***“Our community engagement activities drive regional and institutional success both locally and worldwide”***

The Center for Community Engagement (CCE) at Saginaw Valley State University was established in August of 2017 to further support the university mission to “transform lives through educational excellence and dynamic partnerships, unleashing possibilities for impact in our community and worldwide”. More specifically, the CCE prioritizes goal number 5 of the 2016-2020 SVSU Strategic Plan (see above), supporting this goal by seeking to foster collaborations among our students, faculty, staff and community partners through civic and democratic engagement.

In February 2018 the CCE signed on to be a part of the Voter Friendly Campus (VFC) program, through the Campus Vote Project. In conjunction with this partnership, the CCE sought to further enhance university democratic engagement efforts by coordinating the application of two students, Alison Shaina and Nicole Vogelpohl, to become Democracy Fellows through the VFC program. In continuing to expand upon university commitment to democratic engagement, the CCE signed on to be a part of the American Democracy Project’s ALL IN Challenge in April 2018.

Through participation in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, Saginaw Valley State University has been able to review student voting data from the 2012, 2014 and 2016 elections. The data collected from the 2014 midterm election has helped to provide key insight for this plan, and through its implementation, Saginaw Valley State University and the 2018 SVSU CVP Coalition have developed democratic engagement strategies that aim to improve upon the 2014 59.7% registration rate, 30.8% voting rate of registered students and 18.4% overall voting rate.

In participating in the VFC program, ALL IN Challenge and writing this Democratic Engagement Plan, Saginaw Valley State University commits to institutionalizing civic and democratic engagement, further engaging students, faculty, staff and community members in collaborative partnerships that enhance opportunities for voter registration, education and turnout; ultimately leading to the development of SVSU students as informed and engaged citizens.

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# Goals & Commitment

## *Short Term*

- 5% increase in registered student voters at Saginaw Valley State University by Fall 2020.
- 5% increase in voting rate of registered student voters at Saginaw Valley State University by Fall 2020.
- Increase campus attendance at civic and democratic engagement events and initiatives.
- Develop print, web-based and social media communication platforms that are specific to civic and democratic engagement.
- Establish the Campus Vote Project at SVSU as a sustainable initiative by Fall 2020.

## *Long Term*

- Establish an on-campus polling location by Fall 2022.
- Integrate the use of the TurboVote platform into SVSU Orientation programs by Summer 2022
- Institutionalize the practice of the president sending an online communication to all students during the Fall semester of each year, emphasizing the importance of democratic and civic engagement.
- Establish a student leadership team to help develop an initiative that coordinates collaboration between SVSU students, faculty and staff and local High School students from the Great Lakes Bay Region – promoting voter registration, education and turnout; by Fall 2022.

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# Democratic Engagement Coalition

*The Democratic Engagement Coalition at SVSU represents a diverse group of faculty, staff, students and community partners who are committed to enhancing civic and democratic engagement at SVSU and in our communities. The coalition meets on a bi-monthly basis, at SVSU.*

**Riley Hupfer - Chair**, Assistant Director, Center for Community Engagement; SVSU

**Alison Shaina**, Democracy Fellow, Vice President - College Democrats, Greek Life, SVSU

**Nicole Vogelpohl**, Democracy Fellow, President – Cardinal Photography Student Association; SVSU

**Cal Talley**, Project Manager, Academic Affairs; SVSU

**Gregory Behe**, Associate Director, Residential Life; SVSU

**Jason Schoenmeyer**, Associate Director, Student Life; SVSU

**Erik Trump**, Professor of Political Science; SVSU

**Peter Brian-Rose Berry**, Finkbeiner Endowed Professor in Ethics; SVSU

**Cameron Bruneau**, President – College Republicans; SVSU

**Erik Byron**, Legislative & External Affairs – Student Association; SVSU

**Kevin Machata**, Clerk; Kochville Township

**Jamie Uptmor**, Deputy Clerk; Kochville Township

**Tyson McKinley**, Assistant to the Township Manager; Kochville Township

**Michael Hanley**, County Clerk; Saginaw County

**Kyle Bostwick**, Chief Deputy County Clerk; Saginaw County

**Sarah Kile**, Executive Director; NE Michigan 211

**Rachelle Hilliker**, 5<sup>th</sup> Ward Commissioner; Bay City

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# Voter Registration Initiatives

## **Example Registration Forms**

The SVSU CVP team will fill out registration forms by August 2018 that serve as an example for on and off campus students – helping to guide them through the process of filling out the form, and providing relevant voter registration information.

## **On-Campus Registration Drives**

The SVSU CVP team will work with their partners throughout the Fall 2018 semester to host registration drives on campus – alternating locations to connect with both on and off campus students, from all colleges. The team will partner with the Kochville Township and Saginaw County clerk to provide registration training for students leading the initiative.

## **Mobile Secretary of State**

The SVSU CVP team will partner with the full-service Mobile Secretary of State, hosting them on campus on September 12<sup>th</sup>, from 10am-4pm in the campus courtyard. A print flyer will be advertised throughout campus, and on the CVP semester calendar.

## **Bridge Michigan (Truth Tour)**

SVSU will host non-partisan “think-and-do” tank, Bridge MI to offer voter registration assistance and education material on September 10<sup>th</sup> and October 17<sup>th</sup>; they will collaborate on September 10<sup>th</sup> to show a screening of their documentary Michigan Divided, which follows 6 different Michigan residents living very different lives to examine the political divisions in the state and ask how we can move forward with more unity; and they will partner on October 17<sup>th</sup> to host a town-hall meeting discussing “an educated Michigan”.

## **National Voter Registration Day**

The SVSU CVP team will work in partnership with internal and external stakeholders to offer day-long activities that both celebrate voter registration and civic engagement, as well as offer resources for students who are looking to register to vote.

## **CCE Website – Social Media**

The SVSU CCE will revamp its website and establish social media platforms on Facebook and Instagram by August 2018 that offer resources and instruction specific to voter registration.

## **University Communications**

The SVSU CVP team will work in partnership with the Office of University Communications in July 2018 to develop print and web-based voter registration resources.

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# Voter Education Initiatives

## **Candidate Information Handouts**

The SVSU CVP team will support SVSU Student Association in the development of candidate information handouts by September 2018.

## **On-Campus Candidate Events**

College Democrats and College Republicans have expressed interest in hosting statewide candidates and organizing a debate with state senate candidates. The SVSU CVP team will support the promotion of non-partisan involvement and space at these events.

## **CCE Website – Social Media**

The SVSU CCE will revamp its website and establish social media platforms on Facebook and Instagram by August 2018 that offer resources and instruction specific to voter education – incorporating the education information developed by SVSU Student Association.

## **University Communications**

The SVSU CVP team will work in partnership with the Office of University Communications and SVSU Student Association to develop print and web-based voter education resources by September 2018.

## **Mock Polling Station**

The SVSU CVP team will work in partnership with the Kochville Township Clerk to host a mock polling station on campus during the Fall 2018 semester, to educate students about ballots and the voting process.



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# Ballot Access Initiatives

## **Absentee Ballot Information**

The SVSU CVP team will look to establish a partnership with the #VoteTogether initiative, Kochville Township Clerk and Saginaw County Clerk to coordinate a “Party @ The Mailbox” event by September 2018 that offers students interested in submitting an absentee ballot access to information and resources. Absentee ballot information will also be offered through print and web-based communications.

## **Election Day Programming**

The SVSU CVP team will look to establish a partnership with the #VoteTogether initiative and Kochville County Clerk to offer all-day celebratory programming on November 6<sup>th</sup> at the Kochville polling location. Services that the team hopes to include are an information desk, food and beverages and lawn games.

## **Transportation**

SVSU will look to establish a partnership with Saginaw Transit Authority and Regional Services by September 2018 to offer free transportation services for SVSU students, faculty and staff to local polling locations. Transportation information will be offered through print and web-based communications.

## **CCE Website – Social Media**

The SVSU CCE will revamp its website and establish social media platforms on Facebook and Instagram that offer resources and instruction specific to ballot access, by September 2018.

## **University Communications**

The SVSU CVP team will work in partnership with the Kochville Township Clerk, Saginaw County Clerk and Office of University Communications to develop print and web-based ballot access resources by September 2018.



# August

# 2018



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 <b><u>Move-in week</u></b> Registration Info Tabling TBD	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 <b><u>Welcome Week(s)</u></b> Registration, Education & Tabling TBD	28	29	30	31	

# September

2018



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 <u>Welcome Week(s)</u> Registration, Education & Tabling TBD	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 MI Dividend Documentary Showing <b>Student Life Program Room</b>	11	12 Mobile Secretary of State – <b>Courtyard</b> CARDS Party – Tabling	13	14	15
16	17 Constitution Day	18 College Democrats Statewide Speaker	19 College Republicans Statewide Speaker	20	21	22
23	24 Student Debate - this week, date TBD	25 National Voter Registration Day Kochville Township on campus	26	27	28	29
30						

# October 2018



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 State Senate Candidate Debate -Registration Tabling	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 -Homecoming Week -Registration Tabling TBD	9 MI Voter Registration Deadline	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 Center for MI on campus – Town Hall in evening	18	19	20
21	22 BOV Week	23	24 United Nations Day	25	26	27
28	29	30 Mock Polling Station on campus - tabling	31			

# November 2018



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5 -Tabling	6 <b><u>Election Day!!</u></b> -Transportation -Polls Event -Election Watch Party	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 WI Semester Planning Meeting	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

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# Assessment & Evaluation

- Utilizing an internally developed student id swipe system, the CCE will track attendance at democratic and civic engagement events throughout the Fall 2018 and Winter 2019 semesters. Student demographic data will be tracked through this system, including class standing, field of study and on/off campus status.
- For events that are specific to the SVSU Votes calendar, the CCE will survey participants to evaluate initiatives and programs to determine future improvements.
- The CCE will participate in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), to track key metrics specific to voter registration and turnout at Saginaw Valley State University.