



## **Make It Count Campaign 2018 Action Plan**

### **Background**

During his visit to the University of Delaware in spring 2017, Vice President Joe Biden encouraged students to drop their apathetic attitudes and get involved with civic engagement. The Make It Count (MIC) Campaign is a nonpartisan civic-engagement initiative under the Biden Institute led by University of Delaware students that aims to increase civic participation through a holistic approach. According to data collected by the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), only 57% of students at the University of Delaware voted in the 2016 Presidential Election despite a registration rate of 83%. In preparation for the 2018 midterm elections, which have historically low voter turnout from the young electorate, the Make It Count Campaign aims to increase voter registration, voter turnout, and civic engagement among University of Delaware students.

The Make It Count moniker stems from the cultural shift away from pessimism towards the political process. Not only do we want those who encounter the midterm elections to feel like their vote counts, we encourage making their *voice* count through community involvement, volunteerism, and open-minded discourse. Ultimately, we aim to create life-long ambassadors to democratic involvement in their time at University of Delaware and beyond.

### **Mission Statement**

“To increase voter registration and civic engagement across the University of Delaware campus and the state of Delaware. We will combat apathy and inspire a culture of civic engagement through nonpartisan voter-engagement drives, facilitated discourse, and educational programming to create life-long ambassadors to democratic involvement.”

### **Points of Contact**

Eric Hastings  
Make It Count Student Leader

Julie Millisky  
Former Make It Count Student Leader

Elizabeth (Betsey) Suchanic  
Public Relations Chair, Make It Count campaign

Danielle Metcalfe  
Events Chair, Make It Count campaign

Brian Polito  
Research Chair, Make It Count campaign



## **Points of Contact (Cont.)**

Dr. Lindsay Hoffman (Faculty Adviser)  
Associate Professor, Communication  
Associate Director, Center for Political Communication  
Director, [National Agenda Series](#)

Cathy McLaughlin  
Executive Director of the Biden Institute  
Former Director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard

## **External Partners and Stakeholders**

### **TurboVote/Democracy Works**

TurboVote is an essential resource to the Make It Count campaign. TurboVote serves two purposes:

1. The online service allows students to register to vote in their home state (more than 60% of UD students are out-of-state students)
2. Users can sign up to receive reminders via text or email about upcoming elections, including times and locations for polling places

## **Short Term Goals (Completed by June 2018)**

- Host two [Living Room Conversations](#) (LRC) in Spring Semester to facilitate across the aisle conversations and demonstrate the importance of communication and sharing values
- Increase TurboVote sign-ups by 250 people through two voter registration drives.
- Increase knowledge on voting logistics (i.e. absentee ballots; dates of primaries; how to use TurboVote)
- Submit ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan

## **Committees/Organizational Structure**

- **Executive Leadership** primary responsibilities include: Produce strategic plan of campaign; nurture relationship with TurboVote and ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge; align strategies with long-term vision and mission; provide goals and deliverables to committees; facilitate weekly meetings of all campaign members.
- **Events Committee** primary responsibilities include: Oversee voter engagement drives and living room conversations; outreach to student groups for partnerships; coordination of future events.
- **Research Committee** primary responsibilities include: Create surveys to aid in understanding of voting barriers; compare Make It Count strategies to other engagement projects; highlight relevant trends in voter participation.
- **Public Relations Committee** primary responsibilities include: Draft news releases and blogs; create brand concepts; increase social media and website strength, create video materials and Make It Count visual repository.

## **Accomplishments (As of May 2018)**

- Established a committee of 15 students (undergraduate and graduate)
- Hosted two Living Room Conversations: [“Talking Politics”](#) and [“Free Speech”](#)
- Created a survey to assess student voting habits and barriers (to be distributed in Fall Semester, 2018)
- Compiled a social media content calendar to be used across various platforms (blog, Twitter, Facebook)
- Increased TurboVote (voter registration tool) sign-ups by **1,063** people through three voter engagement drives
- Piloted first annual Greek Week TurboVote Competition among 16 chapters on University of Delaware campus
- Submitted ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan



## **Long Term Goals (Completed by June 2019)**

- Host a Midterm Election event in October 2018 to increase knowledge about voting
- Host monthly Living Room Conversations at the Biden Institute and promote students hosting their own LRCs within residence halls and Registered Student Organization (RSO) meetings
- Increase TurboVote sign-ups by **2,000** people through voter engagement events and competitions with UD Greek organizations, athletic teams, and RSOs
- Implement TurboVote sign-up into UD online registration program for all incoming students
- Educate University of Delaware students on civic engagement activities such as how to contact legislators and representatives in their states and communities
- Partner with the Center for Political Communication's annual "[National Agenda Speaker Series](#)," which exemplifies civil dialogue with nationally recognized speakers to hundreds of students

## **Ideas for future initiatives**

### **Give a Scoop to Get a Scoop – Ice Cream on the Green**

MIC committee members and volunteers will engage with UD students, faculty, and staff to ask: "What is an issue you are passionate about?" Students will write their responses on a large poster, and have the opportunity to take pictures with Make It Count cutouts in our photo booth. All students have the option to get ice cream at the event from UD's student-run creamery, UDairy.

### ***Exercise Your Right to Vote***

Initiate a TurboVote sign-up competition between student athlete teams at the University of Delaware. Offer free exercise classes at the UD Little Bob Carpenter Center gym to raise awareness for the campaign.

### **Town Hall Event**

Students who participated in Living Room Conversations will have the opportunity to participate in a conversation about current topics on a far larger stage in a Town Hall style event. Local politicians and policymakers will be invited to join the conversation and weigh in on topics most interesting to them.

### **Civic Engagement Week at UD**

Leading up to the Midterm Elections, the Make It Count campaign will partner with the Center for Political Communication, College Democrats, College Republicans, and other student groups to host a week of civic engagement events. The week will culminate in the Midterm Election Celebration event.

### **Host a Voter Engagement Event on the Green for National Voter Registration Day**

To celebrate National Voter Registration Day (September 25, 2018), we will host tables where students can learn about why it is important to be a civically engaged student, can register to vote, and/or receive reminders about upcoming elections through TurboVote.

### **Social Media Campaign using #UDMakeItCount during Midterm Elections**

Tweet, Facebook, or Instagram a picture of yourself including an "I Voted Today" sticker and use the hashtag #UDMakeItCount for the chance to win one of 2 \$50 gift cards to a local restaurant.

### **"I am voting because..." Social Media Campaign**

This idea was adapted from the [Rutgers University New Brunswick 2016 Action Plan](#). The Make It Count Public Relations team will head a social media campaign for students to post pictures of themselves with a statement about why



they are voting to demonstrate the personal effects of participation. This will coincide with the National Agenda Speaker Series, “[Midterm Matters](#)” and the associated audio essay contest to give students an opportunity to voice their opinions.

### **On Campus Partners**

Student Government Association  
College Republicans  
College Democrats  
Storytelling Club  
Working Politics Association  
Black Student Union

### **Potential Community Partners**

League of Women Voters  
American Association for University Women  
Network Delaware

### **Make It Count Campaign Brand Concept**

Designed by: Betsey Suchanic, Public Relations Committee Chair



**MAKE IT  
COUNT**



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#### **OPTION A**

This logo was intentionally designed to mimic the US flag by having the overlapping chat bubbles represent the blue and red sections of the flag respectively. The chat bubbles are intended to reflect the programming of “Make it Count” by fostering living room conversation and breaking down barriers to conversations. It also hopes to address some of the polarized political climate by creating spaces for students to speak openly. The check mark indicates the act of voting and imagery associated with voting - as well as being visually similar to a “v” for voting.

The colors of red and blue are both brand-approved University of Delaware brand colors.

#### **FONTS**

**MYRIAD PRO CONDENSED**

#### **COLORS**



