

# **ACTION PLAN 2020**

The University of Delaware - Make It Count



## **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 the 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.”

## **Recent Success**

- Registered 1,517 people with TurboVote in 2019 - ranked 6th in the nation
- According to NSLVE data, in 2018, 84% of eligible UD students were registered to vote but only 42% actually voted but this is still a 26.8% increase from 2014
- On National Voter Registration Day, we registered 360 within 24 hours

## **Leadership**

- Student Leaders
  - Amani Thurman: Co-President
  - Gillian Williams: Co-President
- Dr. Lindsay Hoffman: Faculty Adviser for Make It Count, Associate Professor, Communication Associate Director, Center for Political Communication Director, National Agenda Series
- Perry Spiegel: Staff Advisor for Make It Count, Events Coordinator of the Biden Institute
- Cathy McLaughlin: Executive Director of the Biden Institute, Former Director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard

## **Campus Partners**

- Faculty and Staff
  - Center for Political Communication: Lindsay Hoffman
  - President Assanis
  - Residence Life and Housing: Tierra Fields
  - Student Life: Kathleen Kerr
  - Campus Engagement Initiative: Valerie Lane
  - University Student Centers: Alex Keen
  - Fraternity and Sorority Leadership & Learning: Sarah Lowery
  - Student Diversity and Inclusion: Mark D'Angelo
- Student Organizations
  - Young Americans for Liberty
  - College Democrats
  - College Republicans at UD
  - Student Government Association
  - UD NAACP
  - Blue Hen Leadership Program
  - Turning Point USA
  - Black Student Union
  - Center for Political Communication
  - BGSA

## **External Partners and Stakeholders**

Democracy Works and TurboVote is an essential resource to the Make It Count campaign. Make It Count also has connected to When We All Vote and Mile 22 Associates for additional resources and support. 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

## **Make It Count Meetings**

- Our organization will meet biweekly with the potential of scheduling additional meetings in anticipation of the 2020 primary and general elections.

## **By Spring Semester 2020...**

- Partnership with the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Leadership & Learning for our annual spring competition
- Host education events and kiosks to disseminate information about primary elections

## **By Fall Semester 2020...**

- Establish a partnership with Residence Life and Housing for first-year student residence halls to integrate TurboVote registration into the Neighborhood Empowerment Team program or the check-in process
- Integrate TurboVote sign-ups in the New Student Orientation process and have Make It Count representation available to answer questions
- Host educational events and kiosks to support our peers in advance of the 2020 general election
- Develop a partnership with the Civic Engagement Initiative and Valerie Lane to train the student representatives to be ambassadors of Make It Count
- Train all First Year Seminar peer mentors on TurboVote and give presentations to all sections

**By End of 2020...**

- Gain at least 5,000 TurboVote sign-ups
- Increase voter registration rate from 84% to 90%