

# WESTERN TECHNICAL COLLEGE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2021

*Distributed To:  
ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge  
Campus Vote Project*

## **Executive Summary**

Community Engagement is an essential piece of a Western Technical College education. In 2018, Western Technical College committed to increasing the number of technical diploma and associate degree programs with an embedded community-based learning experience from 48% to 100% by 2025. There are multiple pathways for community engagement and Western recognizes the role civic engagement, specifically voting, plays in shaping our democracy and developing our students to be engaged members of the workforce. It is also critically important for student success to be achieved for our white students and our students of color and we commit to eliminating any equity gaps that may exist by 2025. Therefore, Western Technical College seeks to increase student voter rates during all upcoming midterm and presidential elections. A college team consisting of employees and students will be organized to bring capacity to the Department of Equity, Inclusion, & Community Engagement who will lead the efforts.

## **Campus Team**

1. Kari Reyburn, Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement – Team Lead
2. Julie Christensen, Community-Based Learning Specialist – Team Lead
3. Aislinn Hernandez, Diversity & Inclusion Graduate Assistant – Team Lead
4. Amy Thornton, Vice President for Student Service & Engagement
5. Jess Pintz, Executive Assistant for Student Service & Engagement
6. Leah DurninHoover, Student Life Coordinator
7. Eric Jacobson, Public Relations Specialist
8. Ge Vang, Student Government Advisor & AODA Specialist
9. Rande Daykin, Director of Grants & Legislative Affairs
10. Grace Janssen, Work-Based Learning Specialist
11. Harmony Maves, Campus Election Engagement Project Fellow
12. Megan Miller, Campus Vote Project intern
13. Carmen Ritter, Campus Vote Project intern

## **Commitment**

Western Technical College is part of the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, Campus Compact, Campus Vote Project, the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement.

## **Landscape**

According to our NSLVE Reports, student voting rates:

- 2016 Presidential Elections: 52% (National average of all institutions is 50%)
  - Women voting at 55% vs. Men voting at 49%
  - Students of Color voting at 39% vs. White Students voting at 53%
  - Students ages 40+ voting at 65% vs. Students ages 18-39 voting at 51%
- 2012 Presidential Election: 54%  
*Of registered student voters, at least 81% voted.*
- 2018 Midterm Elections: 44% (National average of all institutions is 39%)
  - Women voting at 44% vs. Men voting at 43%

- Students of Color voting at 33% vs. White Students voting at 45%
- Students ages 40+ voting at 58% vs. Students ages 18-39 voting at 43%
- 2014 Midterm Elections: 31%

**Goals:**

Academic Year 2021

- Increase our student voting rates from 52% in the 2016 Presidential Elections to 55% in the 2020 Presidential Elections.
- Increase our students of color voting rates from 33% in the 2016 Presidential Elections to 40% in the 2020 Presidential Elections.

**Strategy:**

- Recruit and mobilize student interns
- Recruit and mobilize student volunteers
- Distribute 1,000 Cavaliers Vote flyers
- Create a [www.westernnc.edu/Vote](http://www.westernnc.edu/Vote) landing page
  - i) myvote.gov information
  - ii) How-to videos
  - iii) Candidate education
- Translate the college vote page to Spanish: [www.westernnc.edu/Votar](http://www.westernnc.edu/Votar)
- Deploy multiple Get Out the Vote Communications, translate to Spanish when possible
  - i) All student email (2)
  - ii) College Social Media postings (5)
  - iii) Announcement on MyWestern
- Educate students on how to vote at the polls and voter ID requirements
  - i) Virtual voting at the polls event
  - ii) Rider cards distributed
- Request assistance from key stakeholder groups
  - i) Faculty – request virtual classroom presentations or announcement postings
    - (1) Follow up communication to key program areas with low voter rates
  - ii) College Advisors – email signature comment
  - iii) Student Government Leaders
- Post QR code poster on campus in high traffic areas
- Work with the League of Women Voters to register students
- Post countdown in Essential News Employee Newsletter