



Young Voter Strategies 2006 Voter Registration Project

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This election year, young people nationwide will be registered to vote on campus, at work, on the internet, via mobile phone, at rock concerts, and by email. It's all part of an innovative effort by Young Voter Strategies to increase participation by young adults in American elections.

In 2006, Young Voter Strategies seeks to show that higher young voter turnout in 2004 was not a blip on the radar screen, but instead the first sign of a sea change in young voter participation. Election analysts suggest that young voter outreach efforts played a significant role in rising turnout in 2004; youth-targeted outreach in 2006 and beyond is crucial to continue the momentum.

In 2006 Young Voter Strategies is coordinating a national nonpartisan project to register 350,000 young voters using innovative and replicable methods of voter outreach.

The project, involving organizations chosen through a competitive review process and funded by a \$3 million grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts, will not only register 350,000 young voters, but will also analyze the efficacy of various registration strategies. In 2006, groups will register voters using innovative internet, email, and mobile phone strategies, streamlined peer-to-peer tactics, presentations by high school teachers and college professors, and creative outreach by celebrities and musicians at concerts.

Post-election, Young Voter Strategies and a team of academic researchers will analyze each project to create a "Young Voter Toolkit." The toolkit, a compilation of 2006 registration results and best practices learned from a decade of youth outreach, will outline the nuts and bolts of involving young voters in elections and be available to key decision makers, opinion leaders and nonprofits as they build their strategies for the 2008 election.

The organizations part of Young Voter Strategies 2006 registration project are:

Allegheny College's Center for Political Participation (CPP), housed at one of Pennsylvania's top colleges, aims to reenergize democracy with its combination of student-centered programs, community outreach, and scholarly activities. In 2006, CPP will recruit and train student leaders at 30 community colleges in Ohio and Pennsylvania to register new voters on campus and in their communities. Simultaneously, CPP will gather data to create a voter registration model that can be used at any of the more than 1100 U.S. community colleges nationwide, which enroll 11 million students—46 percent of all undergraduates. The project will be directed by Dan Shea, CPP director and author of the forthcoming book *The Fountain of Youth: Political Parties and the Mobilization of Young Americans*. <http://cpp.allegheny.edu>

The American Association of State College and Universities (AASCU) represents 430 public colleges and universities, attended by 3.7 million students. In 2006, AASCU's *American Democracy Project* will tap into this vast network to register young voters at 80 campuses. Administrators and student coordinators will team up to register young voters at home, in class, in dorms, and on campus through peer-to-peer outreach, encouragement from professors in class, direct mail, and email. Two leading voter mobilization researchers will work with AASCU to evaluate which techniques register the most state college students and find out

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which is most likely to result in a vote cast on Election Day. The results can be applied by future registration projects at public colleges, which enroll six million students nationwide. www.aascu.org

Black Youth Vote is a project of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP), which for 30 years has worked with African-American community groups to make voting and civic participation a cultural tradition. Mobilizing young voters through Black Youth Vote is an integral part of NCBCP's mission: people under 35 years of age make up nearly half of the African-American population and, in 2004, young African-American turnout jumped 11 percentage points—a larger jump than any other racial or ethnic group. In 2006, Black Youth Vote will register 18 to 29 year old African-Americans in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan and Texas, through peer outreach at colleges, high schools, and community events, with a specific focus on registering evacuees of Hurricane Katrina. www.bigvote.org

Building Blocks, Building Votes is the Oregon Bus Project's signature nonpartisan neighbor-to-neighbor voter turnout program, focused on mobilizing young apartment renters in urban areas. Approximately three-quarters of 18 to 24 year olds are renters and 73 percent move every year, according to the Census Bureau, requiring them to reregister annually. In 2006, Building Blocks, Building Votes will recruit and train young people in Oregon's densest, youngest neighborhoods to register their friends and neighbors. Personal contact with peers and neighbors is a proven way to increase voter turnout; Building Blocks, Building Votes' apartment building and block captains will register their neighbors with a simple knock on the door. Further, the group will work with political science professor David Nickerson to track and evaluate how well door-to-door, neighbor-to-neighbor outreach works and its impact on voter turnout. www.buildingvotes.org

The Center for Civic Participation (CCP) is the largest coalition of nonpartisan voter outreach groups in the U.S. Working with state and local affiliates, CCP is dedicated to increasing civic engagement by individuals and organizations, with a focus on historically underrepresented communities. In 2006, CCP's partner, Michigan Voice, will register young voters across the state, including Detroit, Flint, Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids, Lansing and Kalamazoo, with special attention paid to young Arab Americans and young people of faith. Michigan Voice will register young voters using three primary nonpartisan methods: peer outreach in social settings, encouragement by religious leaders at worship services, and staff outreach at social service agencies; a researcher will then analyze their program results to determine which messengers, methods, and venues work best to register young voters. www.centerforcivicparticipation.org

The Close Up Foundation believes that textbooks and lectures alone are not enough to help students understand the democratic process and make it work. Students need a "close up" experience in government. Each year, more than 20,000 students, teachers, and other adults take part in Close Up's programs in Washington, D.C., while tens of thousands more participate in state and local government studies programs. In 2006, Close Up's *First Vote* Program will register high school students through its D.C. programs and in high school social studies classes by working with teachers and principals nationwide. Studies show that the earlier a person begins to vote, the more likely that person will be a voter for life. Close Up's program will reach the newest potential voters and start them on a lifetime of electoral participation. www.closeup.org

The League of Young Voters engages young adults, both in college and working, in our democracy. In 2006, the League will use peer outreach, community events, and door-to-door canvassing to register voters in disenfranchised communities in Maine, Wisconsin, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Mexico. Further, in Wisconsin and Maine, the League will register young voters on Election Day through "Parties at the Polls." Partnering with an academic researcher, the League will measure how well each technique works and examine the relationship between when a person registers and whether or not that person votes. www.youngvoter.net

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Mobile Voter and Music for America (MFA) will register 18 to 29 year old voters through an innovative nonpartisan project using text messaging technology, grassroots outreach, and concert promotion. Mobile Voter, a leading mobile technology innovator, uses mobile devices to make voter registration simpler and more accessible, while MFA brings together musicians, fans, and organizations to increase the political engagement of concert-goers. Together, Mobile Voter and MFA will register thousands of young people at concerts through an easy-to-use “text-to-register” system; in front of thousands of fans, musicians will encourage concert-goers to send a text message to receive a voter registration form via email. This project, the first-ever multi-state effort of its kind, will demonstrate how mobile technology can literally put democracy at our fingertips. www.mobilevoter.org and www.musicforamerica.org

The National Council of La Raza, the nation’s largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization, will register young Hispanic voters, the fastest-growing group of young people in the U.S. Adults under 30 constitute 33 percent of the entire adult U.S. Latino population. In 2004, there were nine million 18 to 29 year old Hispanics in the U.S., up 15 percent from 2000, and on Election Day, they voted at a rate six percentage points higher than in 2000. In 2006, La Raza will mobilize this large and growing constituency through its network of 300 community-based organizations, registering young Latino adults at community centers, service centers, and on campus in ten states (California, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, North Carolina, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Wisconsin). www.nclr.org

Redeem the Vote’s mission is to engage America's young people of faith in the political process. Founded in 2004, Redeem the Vote teamed up with Christian rock bands to encourage Evangelical youth to register and vote. In 2006, Redeem the Vote will use various methods, including radio advertisements, email, peer outreach, and promotion by Christian musicians, to drive young people in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida to register to vote on their website. This program will provide valuable insight into best methods for registering young, religious voters. www.redeemthevote.com

The State Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) have 30 years of experience mobilizing college students to reenergize democracy. In 2004, the state PIRGs ran the successful New Voters Project, the largest nonpartisan, youth-targeted grassroots voter mobilization project in U.S. history. It registered 524,000 young adults and contacted 530,000 through a massive get-out-the-vote program. In 2006, the PIRGs will build upon that success by registering students at colleges and universities in California, Arizona, Wisconsin, Colorado, New Mexico, Maryland, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Washington, Oregon, Ohio, Indiana, and Connecticut. From their work, we will refine best practices for registering college students in many venues, including in class, at events, and at home. www.pirg.org

Women’s Voices, Women Vote (WVWV) mission is to ensure that unmarried women—one of the largest, fastest-growing group of voters in the U.S.—do not remain on the sidelines of our democracy. In 2004, young women led the youth voter turnout increase, thanks in part to WVWV’s outreach, including a 16-state voter registration and turnout campaign and public service announcements featuring Jennifer Anniston and Helen Hunt. In 2004, unmarried women increased their share of the electorate from 19 percent in 2000 to 22.4 percent. In 2006, Women’s Voices, Women Vote will use strategic direct mail, email, and phone outreach in 16 states; the subsequent analysis of this project by professional researchers will be an invaluable tool for groups and campaigns seeking to register young single women in future elections. www.wvww.org

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