

North Carolina A&T State University

**Beyond The Vote: From Small Turn Out to All Turn Out
Voter Education*Voter Registration*Get Out the Vote**

Voter Engagement and Education

*******2018*******

All in Challenge 2018

I. The Executive Summary

North Carolina Agricultural and Technological State University is a public, coeducational, historically black, doctoral research university located in Greensboro, North Carolina. As an 1890 public land grant university; community engagement is a major part of our mission. Through the *Beyond the Vote* initiatives, NC A&T State University will engage students in meaningful political conversation and instill electoral engagement as a priority throughout the campus community and beyond. The action plan is a combination of advocacy, individual empowerment and results that Student Affairs, Academic Affairs and External Affairs will promote, through democratic engagement across diverse environments. The plan will be implemented by the stakeholders.

National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE)

The following is data from the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement and NC A&T State University is one of 1000 colleges and universities that participates in the NSLVE study. The Institute for Democracy and Higher Education at Tufts University’s Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life initiated NSLVE, which provides data that institutions use to reflect and create civically engaged environments designed to produce an educated citizenry.

Per the 2012 vs the 2016 election data, NC A&T State University students voted in the Presidential Election at a rate of 59.7%, in 2012, the voting rate declined to 43.2%, in 2016. During the mid-term elections in 2014, the voting rate of registered students was 33.3%. These percentages are the catalyst that will direct the initiatives that reinforce the concept, that politics is local, and that the mayoral race is equally important to the presidential election; and efforts to make the university and neighboring community’s commitment, to being civically engaged, a salient characteristic.

Brief Summary	Elections Years	
	2012	2016
NC A&T State University’s voter turnout rate decreased by 16.1 from 2012 to 2016, which is a decrease of 37%. This rate includes registered and non-registered student voters.	59.3%	43.2% (-16.1)
NC A&T State University’s student voter turnout rate was 12.4 points above the national average 2012, and it was 7.2 points below the national average in 2016. This rate includes registered and non-registered student voters	46.9% (-12.4)	50.4 (-7.2)
NC A&T students who voted at the on campus polling site decreased by 1,694 votes from 2012 to 2016, which is a decrease of 61%.	4,433 75.5%	2,739 70.3%
Number of NC A&T students who voted in-person on election day	1,255	842 (-413)

The data from the NSLVE from 2012 - 2016 clarified that the campus community focuses intently on the Presidential Election every four years, and the voting rate demonstrates that. Yet student groups annually conduct call to action activities to promote voter registration and voting, with limited turnout. The development of the action plan will engage the entire community to focus annually on all campaigns local, state and national, in solidarity with the university.

A&T strategic plan Preeminence 2020, outlines the institutions core values: Learning, Excellence Integrity, Respect, Creativity, Engagement and Service. These values will guide the initiatives. In 2017, NC A&T expanded partnerships with bi-partisan community organizations: Democracy NC, Common Cause and the League of Woman Voters, to name a few. The aim was to implement ***Beyond the Vote: From Small Turn Out To All Turn Out***, a series of voter education programs. These community groups have NC A&T student interns who work closely with the university community and coordinate robust initiatives.

In an effort to bring the neighboring community to NC A&T to foster meaningful conversations, the expanded university committee collaborated on a variety of initiatives. The activities include Call to Action, Voter Registration, Get out the Vote and Voter Education. Based on the growth in participation across diverse environments, the institution looks forward to the 2018-2019 *Beyond the Vote* partnerships and series of events.

Voter Registration

Voter registration is a consistent activity across the campus throughout the year, in 2012, 7,200 students were registered and in 2016, 6,100 were registered, per NSLVE. Student organizations, from the Student Government Association and Student University Activities Board, to academic clubs and NACCP are trained to do voter registration. Student organizations will also partner with community organizations, Democracy NC, Common Cause and the League of Woman Voters in an effort to reinforce their training and introduce the students to community organizations that work to empower the community through civic engagement. The League of Woman Voters partnered with the university library and on a weekly basis and they, along with student volunteers, registered students. Student leaders hosted Voter Registration Parties, Dorm Storming and U-Time Voter events and partnered with the History and Political Science Clubs working closely with faculty.



Bi-annually the Council of Presidents host an Organizational Fair where 150 student organizations introduce themselves to the entire university community, but especially freshmen and transfer students. Attendance exceeds over 900 students. Pictured above is the student coordinator from the Office of Student Development and the Voter Registration Coordinator from the League of Woman Voters. The league registered over 350 students during a 4 hour period, which was a record for the organization.

II. Leadership

Co-Chairs

Ms. Sharon Hoard
Director of Leadership and Engagement

Mr. Ray Trapp
Director of External Affairs

Ex-Officio Student Member
Appointed by Student Government Association

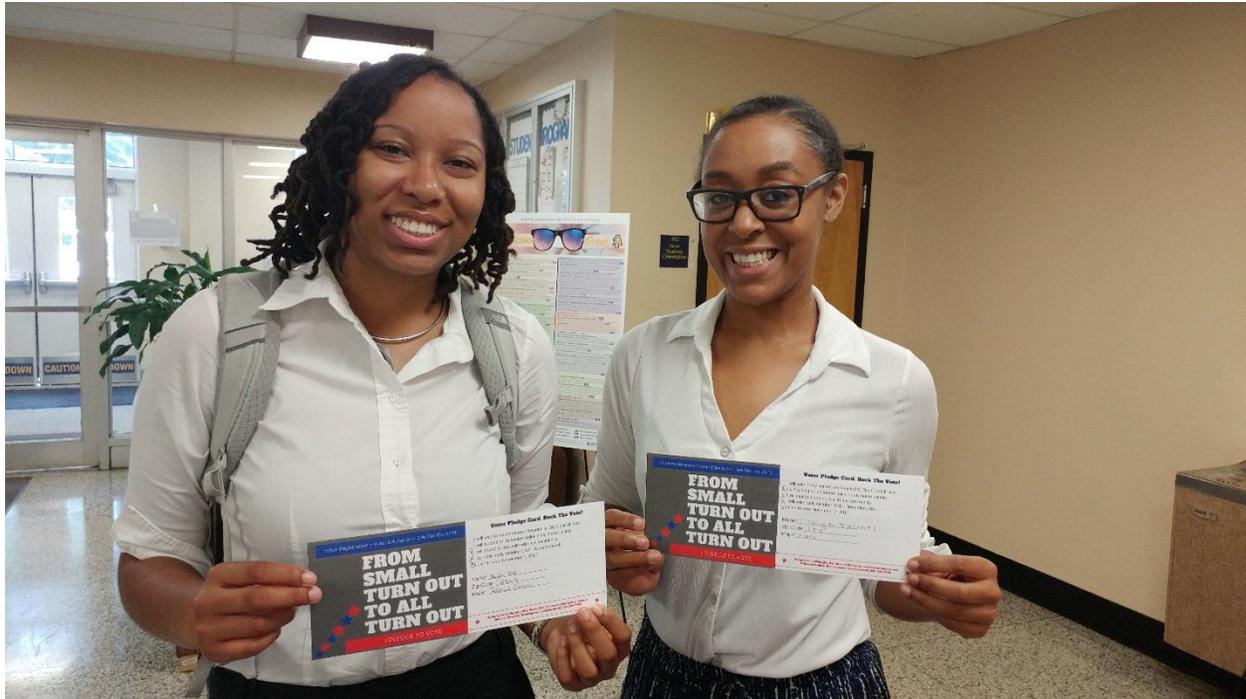
The 2018 committee will be expanded to include members from the Faculty and Staff Senate and additional community partners. The inclusion of the Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs will be significant in our efforts to include voter education in academic courses, reinforcing that all politics is local and crosses diverse environments. Sub committees can focus on call to action initiatives that focus on all voting age members of the community, not just students, making civic engagement an integral part of the community. Invitations will be distributed to each department or group to appoint a member to the working committee. The committee will meet monthly and those dates will be determined by the members.

The Civic Engagement Committee Representatives:

- Student Government Association
- Student Activities
- Residence Hall Association
- Multicultural Affairs
- Academic Affairs
- Faculty Senate
- Staff Senate
- Community Partners
- University Relations
- Office of External Affairs
- Office of Student Development
- TurboVote
- College Vote Project

Call to Action

In 2017, the committee designed a Voter Pledge Card students signed the cards indicating they would vote locally or in their hometown via absent ballot. The university also sent out the Turbo Vote website to the entire student community. By November, 479 students had completed the pledge cards. The cards also captured their email addresses and these students received invitations to all the activities. Once students filled out the card they received a sticker that said *From Small Turn Out to All Turn Out*, which was coined by the League of Woman Voters.



Pictured above is the Student Government Association President and an Aggie Success Leader.

III. Commitment and IV. Landscape

NC A&T is a trail blazer on many fronts and as we move to change the culture, making voter education salient across campus, in 2018-2019, it is the goal to engage the academic community making civic learning explicit across programs. Two of the essential committee members will be representatives from the Faculty Senate and Staff Senate. The National Study of Learning and Voting Engagement assessment results will be made available to the entire committee, Deans of colleges and university community.

In collaboration the academic and student affairs committee members will review the NC A&T NSLVE data and develop a protocol to share the program outcomes with individual colleges. A number of co-curricular civic learning and democratic engagement activities are scheduled throughout the year in collaboration with diverse campus, local and state bi-partisan organizations. The outcomes are designed to educate, increase the numbers of registered students and plan strategies to get out the vote. Academic assessment and review will help us determine what courses have present civic learning in the curriculum.

Inviting the executive director of Campus Compact, to share the findings of the Campus Compact Annual Membership Survey, will inform the committee about the current state of campus engagement and emerging trends and will bridge the gap between service and community engagement.

V. Goals & Objectives

Goal

To increase civic engagement at NC A&T through voter registration, voter education and getting out the vote, making these activities important components of the university culture.

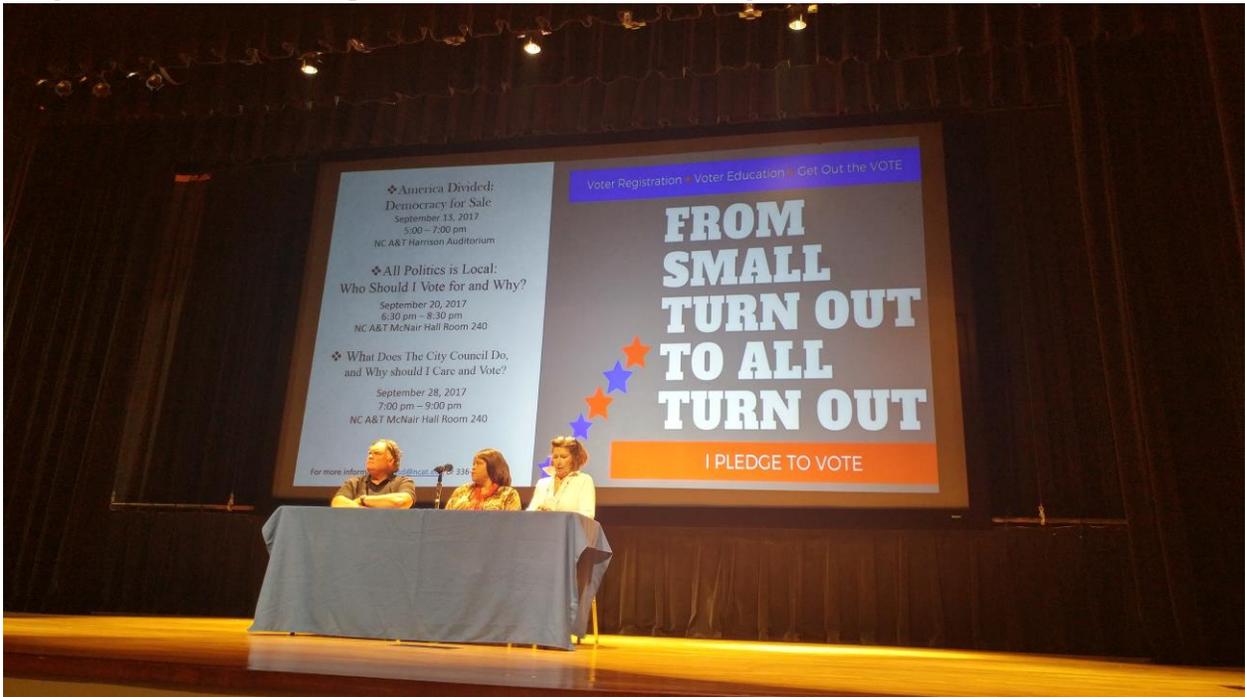
Objectives

- Increase the voting rate by 10% from 2016 annually for local, state and national elections
- Civic education and democratic engagement in curriculum
- Participation of the university community in civic education programs
- Voter registration merge online for campus residents with post office boxes
- Build relationships with political representatives through town halls, forums, and informal gatherings
- Educate community about voting processes via website and student ambassadors

Who Should I Vote For and Why? 2017 Candidates forum 2 Mayoral and 14 City Council candidates, combined attendance of students and neighboring community. A collaboration between Democracy NC, Common Cause, The League of Woman Voters, department of political science, history and SGA.



Democracy for Sale: America Divided - Documentary Showing – Voter Education on voter suppression/gerrymandering a collaboration between Democracy NC, Common Cause, The League of Woman Voters, political science and student organizations.



VII. Strategies

Voter Education, Voter Registration and Get out the Vote Activities

Spring Events

January 2018

- Organize campus committee
- Prepare volunteers for voter registration events.
- Orientation Week student voter registration

February 2018

- Committee meetings
- Prepare volunteers for voter registration events.
- Voter registration drives (Turbo Vote, LWV, Common Cause)
- Reserve shuttles for primary election
- Voter education (Why primaries matter/exist)

March 2018

- Candidate fair

April 2018

- Early voting drives (event centered)

May 2018

- Primary day

Fall Events

August 2018

- Organize Welcome Week voter registration materials and volunteers

September

- Prepare volunteers for voter registration events
- Student Voter Registration Parties campus wide
- Voter Registration Pop-ups in academic buildings
- Political education how to vote and types of political engagement
- Voter Pledge cards distributed and collected at all events

October 2018

- Create marketing campaign to spread the word about early, marching to the polls and November voting.
- Voter Pledge cards distributed and collected at all events
- Candidates Rally's – Meet the candidates
- Party to Polls campus wide
- Voter Registration Pop-ups in academic buildings
- Canvas and table at various on campus events to promote November voting.
- Finalize details with campus enterprises for shuttles to polls.
- Conduct pre-project interviews with students to measure interest in voting, political engagement, etc.

November 2018

- Final voter registration push via tabling and marketing campaign.
- Pre-election Day registration and early voting
- Election Day voting and transportation (November 6, 2018)
- Collect data from November election, including number of students transported, number of new voters registered, etc.

VIII. Reporting

The Plan will be shared with the community and modified as needed by the committee. The data from NSLVE will be share with the committee and made available upon request.

IX. Evaluation

The primary source will be the NSLVE, tracking voting registration and voting, plus the local Board of Elections who also track voter registration. Conduct focus groups of students who complete the voter pledge cards to determine they engagement during the election process and their thoughts and attitudes about political participation. Use their reflections to determine best practices, which impact turnout and effective engagement.

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