

educate



Voter Education is informing the public on their democratic rights, the election process, candidates and the issues. Even if 100% of people are registered to vote, you will still have poor voter turnout if those people are not motivated to make the effort to go out and vote on Election Day.

The best way to motivate people to get out to the polls on Election Day is to educate them about who is running and how their vote might affect the issues that they care about!



GET INFORMED

If you want to educate voters or peers, the first thing you need to do is educate yourself. Find out who your local, state, and national office-holders and policy makers are, what politicians are up for re-election, and who the challengers are in those elections.

Become knowledgeable about the nuts and bolts of government and the voting process.

Research your local candidates and community issues.

You can have huge impact on elections (especially local elections) by simply letting your friends, neighbors, co-workers and others, know where the candidate stands on issues that matter to you.



TEACH

Have a Voter Registration Drive: A voter registration drive is a planned effort by a person or group to register potential voters. Setting up tables in the community is a good opportunity to both provide information to potential voters and help get people registered. Be sure to provide information on the candidates, relevant issues, and voting information as well as voter registration materials available.

Host a Debates or Forum: Debates and forums are structured events in which candidates are invited to speak before an audience about a specific set of issues. The candidates are each allowed a set amount of time to make a statement (either general or focused on your event topic) followed by a series of questions from a moderator or the audience. These events are great ways to hear directly from the candidates on the issues you care about.

Organize Candidate and Political Fairs. Invite candidates, political parties, groups supporting or opposing ballot measures, groups concerned about particular issues, and other interested parties to set up tables, distribute information, and meet people. If the candidates show up, it will give people a unique opportunity to talk with them in an informal atmosphere.

Hold Debate Watch Parties. Debate watch parties are events to get small groups together in living rooms, community centers, schools, libraries, and other venues to watch political debates and then discuss them.

Try out “Power Hour” Education and Letter-Writing Events. These are one-hour activities where you and a group of your peers will become educated on a specific issue and then start a letter-writing campaign to let your voices be heard. Before the event, prepare a fact sheet about the issue and a list of your elected officials’ or candidates’ names and contact information to hand out.

Plan “Service Stop” Events with Candidates. Inviting political candidates and office holders to service stop events is a great opportunity for you to educate candidates about the importance of community service and the issues that matter to you. Plan one, or two, or a series of short community services events and invite candidates to join you to talk about their campaign and help with the project. You can also plan a whole day of service around a particular type of issue or community need.



SHARE YOUR STORY

Richmond, California

In November, 2011, the Chinese American Voters Education Committee mobilized 100 young volunteers to help local residents get registered for the November 8 election. David Lee, Executive Director of the Chinese American Voters Education Committee, David Lee said at the time, “our mission is to help the Richmond vote and to train young people to apply themselves towards improving their neighborhood. We are nonpartisan so our goal is strictly to increase voter turnout without steering voters to any particular candidate, party or issue.”

Rock the Vote

Rock the Vote kicked off the 2012 Presidential election cycle with “Rock the Caucus” events at high schools across the state of Iowa. “We will be running mock caucuses, getting students registered to vote, and educating and preparing them to participate in 2012. We are thrilled to kick off the 2012 election cycle in Iowa,” said Heather Smith, President of Rock the Vote. Rock the Vote’s election campaign will aim to register 1.5 million young people through national online and offline efforts.