



VOTER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Voter Education activities should be conducted in order to increase awareness, knowledge and discussion about the political process and substantive issues of concern to the Black community. Here are some ideas of voter education activities to host in your community.

Candidate Forum

All candidates for Local County, state, or federal office should be invited to attend a special forum where they address questions from the community.

Demonstration of Voting Machine

Chapters, community groups, or Church's may obtain voting machines for the purpose of showing citizens how to operate these machines.

List of Voting Locations

Distribute these lists at various locations in the community, including churches, supermarkets, shopping centers, beauty parlors and barbershops.

Public Service Announcements

Many churches have radio and television ministries. Public Service Announcements (PSA's) should be prepared to promote and encourage voter registration and voter participation. PSA's can be prepared and broadcasted by radio and television stations.

Coalitions and Community Coordination

Building coalitions to share resources with other community organizations involved in voter education is important. By doing so, your chapter will maximize the outreach and community participation in voter education activities.





VOTER EDUCATION ON YOUR CAMPUS

You can register 100 percent of the people on campus, but still have poor voter turnout if they are not motivated to vote on Election Day. The best way to motivate people is to educate them about the local, state and federal issues. Below are some activities to help gather and distribute information about what candidates and issues are on the ballot, so students are prepared to cast their vote.

Candidate and Political Fairs

A candidate or political fair is similar to a job fair. Invite the candidates, political parties, groups supporting or opposing ballot measures, and other interested parties onto your campus 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 about the issues they are interested in. A political fair requires advance planning. To get on the candidates' schedule, select the date for your fair early (October is usually a good time). Send out invitation to all the groups you wish to invite. And be sure to invite all the candidates and organizations for table space-but only you can judge what they are willing to pay on your campus. And don't forget to alert the media about your political fair.

Debates & Forums

Candidate debates and forums are a staple of American politics. Hosting a debate on your campus will help make people more aware of the upcoming election, and allow them to interact with the candidates. As with everything, plan ahead. Pick several dates, then contact the candidates. Since you want them to attend, you will have to work around their schedules. Contacting them early in the process increases the probability of finding an open date agreeable to everyone involved. The next step is to settle on the format of your debate. A standard format has a moderator (e.g. the college president, anchor, anchor of a local newscast, etc.) who will introduce the candidates, explain the rules of the debate, ask the questions of the candidates, and act as referee. The questions should be developed by a panel of people representing a broad range of views and interest in the community. Make sure the questions cover a variety of topics. Don't give the questions to the candidates in advance! Not every candidate will agree to take questions from the audience, but when they do, it can be very effective. It will allow the community to question the candidates about issues they care about that may not have been covered in the prepared questions. Try to get your campus radio or TV station to broadcast the debate so that you can reach a wider audience. Be sure to alert the local media.

Campus Visits by Candidates

If candidates for local, state, or federal office can't make it to campus for a debate or political fair, invite them to campus for a meeting with your voter registration coalition. Visiting with candidates on your campus will allow you to talk with them about the issues in a relaxed atmosphere. Be sure to make this opportunity available to all candidates.

