

THE DIFFERENCE

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE **COLLABORATIVE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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A vibrant democracy requires that voters be informed and participate in electing leaders and shaping public policy. Active citizenship is the foundation of civil society. Our nation was founded (ostensibly) on the principles of one person, one vote, and that all citizens have the power to make a difference. An important way to achieve these principles is to make your voices heard at the polls on Election Day.



Higher Ed and Political Participation

Colleges and Universities have historically been sites of active political discourse and engagement. Student activism has been responsible for changes at campus, local, and national levels throughout U.S. history. College students in particular are the object of many programmatic attempts to imbue the values and practices upon which a healthy democracy depends, and it is clear that more knowledgeable and informed citizens are more likely to engage in politics and in their communities.

Civic engagement has been a part of higher education's mission for a long time, as colleges and universities understand the importance of graduating informed and engaged citizens.

Universities in the United States long prided themselves on a commitment to civic society through education. American colleges and universities were traditionally charged with the responsibility of training students to take their place in a larger civic society, to teach them to be committed members of the community, and to promote positive change.

Yet, according to the US Census Bureau, young adult voters between the ages of 18 through 24 have consistently voted at lower rates than all other age groups in every presidential election since 1962. The US Census Bureau's voting data also shows that, on average, less than half of eligible young adult voters will actually make it to the polls for a national presidential election.

Research shows that while college students are passionate about social issues and eager to be a part of something larger than themselves, they are not sufficiently engaged in political dialogue or making their voices heard through their vote. Young adults (ages 18-29) made up about 21% of the voting eligible population in 2014, but voter turnout for this demographic has reached record lows in recent years. Only 17% of 18- to 24-year-olds cast a ballot in the 2014 elections.

Promoting greater participatory democracy involves fostering civic competence, and education is critical to this development. Civic competencies include a civic conscience, a willingness to engage in participatory decision-making, and persistent critical inquiry. People

in a democratic society must learn how to understand the larger world by interacting, working collaboratively, and talking about social issues in groups.

Why Vote?

As such a large voting bloc, young people can make an enormous difference with their vote. The sheer size of this age group – which in 2015 overtook Baby Boomers as the largest generation – makes it a significant presence in U.S. politics, and this impact will only continue to grow.

This year in particular, college students and young voters (defined as voters ages 18-29) are set to have an incredible impact

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on the election, especially in Colorado. In fact, Colorado is ranked in the top five of states where young voters may have a disproportional impact this election - 5th in the Presidential Race, 5th in Senate Races, and 4th in House Races (<http://civicyouth.org/youthvote2016/>).

Even in midterm elections, and in off-year elections like 2015, local offices are on the ballot and can be decided by a matter of a few votes. Local offices and issues have a direct impact on a student's home and college community, as these officials make decisions on topics like student debt, funding for higher education, and the economy.

- Contribution by Dr. David Harker

Voting Assistance

There's a CC Hotline for students who have any issues or questions about voting. Might be worth adding to the newsletter

ColoradoStudentsVote.org/CC
This nonpartisan site has information specific to CC students, including the Voter Service Center that's most convenient for them, the types of ID to bring, and where to get assistance. Feel free to share this link if you find it useful.

Questions about voting? Text
CCVOTEHELP to 33888
Msg & data rates may apply. Terms:
hustle.life/terms

Demystifying Ballot Jargon

Ever wonder what all of the terms that are on your ballot actually mean? It can get confusing!

Ballot Measure

- Anything that appears on the ballot besides candidates.

Amendment

- A measure placed on the ballot by the state legislature that amends the state constitution is labeled an "Amendment," followed by a letter.
- A measure placed on the ballot through the signature-collection process that amends the state constitution is labeled an "Amendment," followed by a number between 1 and 99.

Proposition

- A measure placed on the ballot by the state legislature that amends the state statutes is labeled a "Proposition," followed by a double letter.
- A measure placed on the ballot through the signature-collection process that amends the state statutes is labeled a "Proposition," followed by a number between 100 and 199.

Referendum

- A question referred to the voters by the state legislature

Sources: Colorado 2016 Blue Book

Election Season in the Classroom

Block 2: American Politics & Government – Dr. Dana Wittmer Wolfe

Students from American Politics & Government spent three days of the block volunteering. The first week they volunteered for a Presidential campaign, the second week they volunteered for a Senate campaign, and the third week they volunteered for a local campaign. This ‘real world’ field experience helped the students better understand the academic articles that they were reading in class. For example, students reported a better grasp on



such topics as campaign messaging, the ideological thinking of voting, and why people may or may not vote.



Block 3: The United States Congress – Dr. Elizabeth Coggins

In this block’s United States Congress course, students are studying congress through the lens of elections. They are reading and engaging with the most cutting edge research on how candidates run campaigns, what strategies they use, and how the polarized climate of this season affect elections. “Down ballot elections are particularly fascinating this year because both presidential candidates at the top of the ticket are less likely to have large coat tails as we typically expect in presidential election years,” says Dr. Coggins. The students in this course are currently working with the CCE to identify volunteer placements for the U.S. Senate or House campaigns.

Bioscience Outreach Club: Fostering a Love of STEM

Bioscience Outreach Club is one of the student-led organizations on campus with the focus of bringing the excitement of science to youth in Colorado Springs.

The organization partners with Audubon Elementary School and meets with third through fifth graders bi-monthly to share interactive and education science experiments with the students after school.

This past month, Bioscience included a squid dissection lab and demonstrated plate tectonics with s'mores. Student involved in Bioscience feel it is a way for students at Colorado College to support STEM education and positively influence younger students.



If you are interested in joining this student organization or would like more information, please contact Ines Siepmann ines.siepmann@coloradocollege.edu.

Join us Election Night in Worner Campus Center

Refreshments will be served as we watch live coverage of election results, starting at 5:00pm!



This event attempts to imitate, satirize, and make sense of the wilderness of the media coverage and anxiety that surround election 2016. Four CC students have partnered with New York musical theater composer Michael Friedman, to follow the primary campaign trail, interview people, and write songs using verbatim transcripts of their stories. The result is an intriguing story of our country's intricate political climate during the exhausting run up to election day.

Kathryn Mohrman Theatre
Saturday, November 5,
7:00 p.m.

Lecture: Newt Gingrich



Newt Gingrich is well known as the architect of the “Contract with America” that led the Republican Party to victory in 1994 by capturing a

majority in the United States House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years. He was a Republican candidate for president of the United States from 2011 to 2012. Gingrich is a Fox News contributor and the author of 27 books, including 14 fiction and nonfiction New York Times best-sellers. He is a senior advisor at Dentons, the world’s largest law firm, as well as a senior scientist at Gallup. Recognized internationally as an expert on world history, military issues, and international affairs, Gingrich is the longest-serving teacher of the Joint War Fighting course for major generals.

7:00 p.m., Kathryn Mohrman Theatre (formerly Armstrong), inside Armstrong Hall, 14 E. Cache La Poudre St. Tickets: Tickets are free but required, and will be available beginning at 8 a.m., Friday, Oct. 14, at the Worner Desk in the Worner Campus Center, 902 N. Cascade Ave. Tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis for the event. Limit of one ticket. Free to the public.

Call for Mini-Grant Proposals

The CCE is accepting proposals for the William P. Dean Memorial Fund until Monday, November 28th. The fund supports undergraduate initiatives and projects that collaborate with a community nonprofit to address the needs of marginalized populations. The maximum award will be \$750, and a maximum of two awards will be given this year. For proposal guidelines and additional information, visit the CCE's William P. Dean Fund Mini-Grant page.

Ponderosa Project is hiring for Spring 2017!

The Programs Coordinator is responsible for Ponderosa Project events, from deciding the event space to marketing and publicity for the event, as well as outreach to ensure events are meeting the needs of the community. Ponderosa Project's mission is to host community art events that bring together the CC student body and the larger Colorado Springs community to bring awareness about issues of homelessness in Colorado Springs. Applications are due Wednesday, November 16th, 2016 by 11:59pm. Full position description and details for applying are available on the CC Student Employment website.

Student Christian Movement Hosting Discussion on Homelessness in Colorado Springs

Student Christian Movement, a student group that discusses the intersections between faith and social justice, will be hosting an interfaith discussion with the founder of the Coalition for Compassion and Action in Colorado Springs. Particular focus of the discussion will be on the problem of homelessness here in Colorado Springs and discussing ways in which we can get involved to help our community. November 3rd at 7:30 in the Interfaith house.

Grits Community Meeting @ Concrete Couch

Come share your ideas and help plan the next issue of Grits! All are welcome and food will be provided. Grits Collective works to share stories, poetry, and artwork created by people experiencing homelessness and hunger in Colorado Springs. 3:30pm - 4:30pm, Sat. November 5th, 214 E. Vermijo Ave.

A Note from our Director

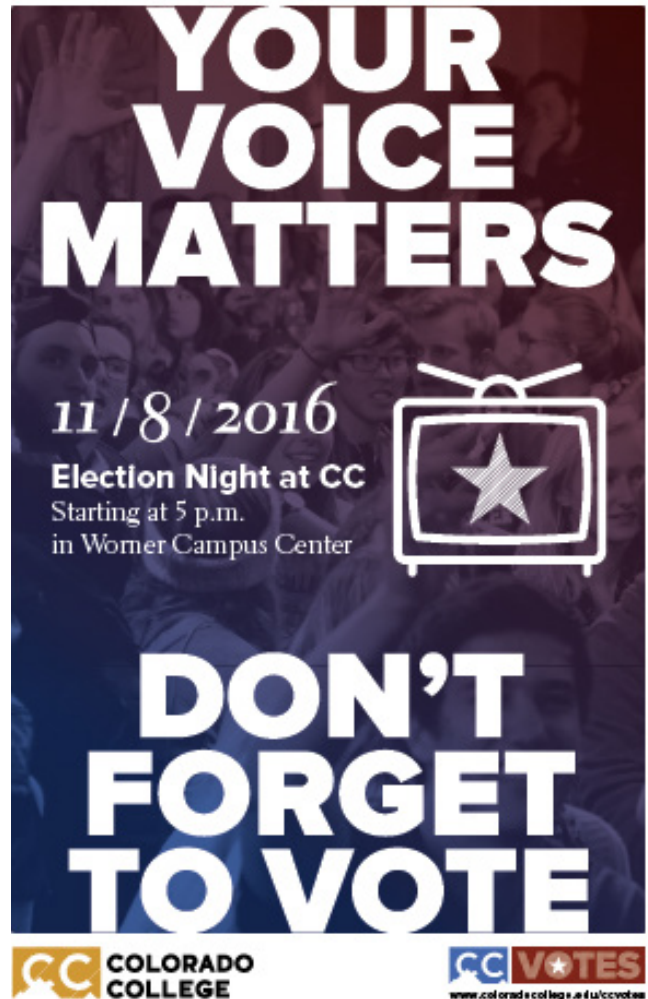
Dear CC Community,

It is with mixed emotions that I share with you the news that I will be leaving Colorado College at the end of Block 3. I have accepted the position of Director of the Center for Civic Engagement at Ithaca College, and will be moving to NY in late November. While I am very excited for this new position, I will miss Colorado College, and will greatly miss working with such wonderful students, colleagues, and friends. It has been a true pleasure to work with many of you at CC, to get to know you, and collaborate with you on so many great programs and projects over the last two years.

I am truly thankful for the opportunity to work together at such an excellent institution. If CC was on the East Coast, I don't think I'd ever want to leave. However, it has been a lot harder for my partner and I to be so far from our friends and families back East than either of us would have anticipated when we made the move out here.

I am very proud of our work in the CCE, and it has been wonderful to work with such an incredible staff. The search for a new CCE Director will begin in the coming weeks, and Jordan Radke (current Assistant Director in the CCE) will serve as acting Director upon my departure until the position is filled permanently. The CCE will be in wonderful hands under her leadership, and I am excited to see how the Collaborative will continue to thrive and grow in the future.

Best,
Dave Harker, Director



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**Collaborative for
Community Engagement**