



**Charleston County Board of Voter Registration and Elections
February 2026**



Introduction

In Charleston County, a grassroots initiative is transforming civic engagement one neighbor at a time. The Voter Ambassador Program, launched in 2024, inspires local residents to become catalysts of democratic participation. The initiative trains volunteers to host voter registration drives, share accurate election information, and inspire their neighbors to exercise their fundamental right to vote. By equipping volunteers with the knowledge and tools to demystify the voting process, the project bridges critical gaps in community understanding through trusted volunteers, ensuring that every eligible voter feels confident, informed, and motivated to participate in elections.

Development

The program was designed with several core goals:

- Empower members to become active participants in the electoral process
- Provide accurate voter registration and election information
- Increase voter turnout and civic engagement
- Reach underserved members of Charleston County

The program was born from recognition that many individuals in our county are eager to do more to support others through the electoral process. The Voter Ambassador program was designed to provide them with the tools, training, and resources to engage neighbors effectively. By developing a strategic approach that enables informed residents to share accurate voting information, the program transforms community members into reliable sources of electoral knowledge, leveraging the most powerful communication tool available: direct, personal conversations between friends and family.



“We are creating a **trusted** network of informed ambassadors who can confidently share facts about how elections are run in our county,”
— Charleston County Elections Executive Director Isaac Cramer

Left: A Voter Ambassador prepares to assist citizens during a tabling event.

The Charleston County Voter Ambassador Program has since emerged as a critical pathway to connect with underserved communities in a more meaningful way by equipping trusted local leaders to share accurate information directly with the people they serve. At Charleston County Elections Headquarters, participants undergo comprehensive training that goes beyond simple fact-sharing, diving deep into the complexities of voter education, election laws, and effective communication strategies. Ambassadors learn to quickly analyze and respond to questions or concerns, understand current voting regulations, and develop culturally sensitive approaches to engaging a diverse populace.

“Our ambassadors empower voters, one conversation at a time,”
— Charleston County Elections Community Engagement Manager Haley Oryell



Above: Various tools for Voter Ambassadors are displayed.

After completing their training, Voter Ambassadors are given a robust toolkit of professionally designed resources, including detailed informational flyers, voter registration forms, and a variety of voting guides. Those who complete training are also given a pin to wear that identifies them as a trained Voter Ambassador. In addition, we offer many high-quality materials that ambassadors can borrow for events, such as a branded tablecloth, yard signs, and table signage. This vibrant imagery establishes authenticity and fosters trust from residents.



The program's ultimate goal transcends simply sharing information. It aims to build a sense of connection to the electoral process, encouraging citizens to become active, informed participants in democracy.

Left: Voter Ambassadors provide information and registration assistance during a tabling event.

Results

The program has demonstrated significant success since its launch, with over 220 community members trained through several classes in less than two full years. Off-site sessions were also organized and conducted in direct response to requests from community groups. These out-of-office trainings brought knowledge into communities that have traditionally faced marginalization. For many outings, Voter Ambassadors are strategically positioned to provide on-the-ground support in areas with historically low voter participation. They provide a presence at events beyond the logistical limitations of our Outreach Team, ensuring vital election information and assistance directly reaches more residents than ever before.

The Voter Ambassador Program cuts across traditional political and demographic boundaries, uniting Charleston County residents through a shared commitment to local participation. By recruiting volunteers from diverse backgrounds, including different political beliefs, age groups, ethnicities, and socioeconomic levels, the program creates a unique space where people can connect beyond partisan lines. Our youngest voters volunteer alongside retired professionals to collaborate on voter education and come together with a common goal of uplifting neighbors and protecting the integrity of the electoral process. This inclusive approach transforms the project from a simple voter outreach initiative into a powerful platform for community building, mutual understanding, and collective civic responsibility.

Voter Ambassadors have also come from other counties, as no neighboring areas currently offer a similar opportunity. A Voter Ambassador Program [has launched in Richland County, SC this year](#) after elections staff attended one of our trainings. Several local news outlets have also regularly reported on the initiative's launch and continued interest, with a [recent feature](#) highlighting its value while the nation enters a volatile midterm cycle.



Above: Voter Ambassadors provide assistance during a tabling event for high school students preparing to vote for the first time.

Future Sustainability

Given the ongoing demand and success of the program, we are continuing to hold near-monthly sessions to train more Voter Ambassadors. Additionally, the office will be launching a new Student Voter Ambassador Program in Fall 2026. This initiative will build off of the strategies and values utilized through the parent program to recruit and train currently enrolled high school and college students to serve as trained peer ambassadors. These young ambassadors can promote civic awareness on their campuses, laying foundations among peers for lifetimes of community engagement.

To further foster a shared sense of purpose within this interwoven group, a specialized newsletter launched this winter. The quarterly publication highlights our Voter Ambassadors' efforts and provides information on upcoming opportunities to serve. Plans are also being developed for current Voter Ambassadors to enhance their knowledge through specialized trainings. These sessions will delve into more advanced topics surrounding elections and voter registration, such as accessibility considerations to ensure all eligible voters can cast a ballot with confidence and dignity.

Conclusion

We are proud of the remarkable success of our Voter Ambassador Program. As we enter its third full year, the program has consistently demonstrated its value through well-attended educational sessions and growing engagement. By aiding citizens with comprehensive election knowledge, we are cultivating a more informed and active electorate. The program's ability to connect with diverse members, particularly emerging leaders, underscores our commitment to transparent and accessible processes. Our main goals center around strengthening civic participation, giving all voices an opportunity to be heard, and humanizing our electoral system, one ambassador at a time.



Above: More than a dozen new Voter Ambassadors participate in the program's first training session of 2025.