

FUTURE VOTE INITIATIVE
Montgomery County Board of Elections, Maryland
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Background

In 2004, the Montgomery County Board of Election's (BOE) Future Vote Initiative was developed by Gilberto Zelaya, the Community Outreach Coordinator for the BOE. He recognized that the key to a safe, harmonious, inclusive and sustainable community comes from the actions of those living within its borders. Dr. Zelaya created this Initiative by bringing families together to help register and educate voters about one of the most fundamental rights of the U.S. Constitution. Students become empowered, educated and enlightened through their experience.

By bringing youth (grade 6-12) into the electoral process, the BOE has helped our future leaders share an experience that shapes their values and character and, ultimately, prepares them to set the course of the Nation through their future vote. They see firsthand the time and effort involved in running an election while gaining an understanding of what it means to exercise their vote and empower others to do the same. It provides a bridge to the wider community and helps them develop new skills. The youth and their family members work side-by-side, interacting with diverse cultures, learning about the democratic process, and giving something back to their community through civic participation. As the youth move up in age, they are encouraged to serve as election judges once they reach 16. Everyone involved, including staff and volunteers, work towards the same goal of achieving a fair and balanced election process that shapes the community we know today and want for tomorrow.

Impact

Beginning as a pilot program in 2004 with 500 students, the initiative quickly grew two years later to 1,500-2,500 participants per election cycle. To date, 43,619 students and 26,885 families have participated in the Initiative and the growth continues to be extraordinary.

Our volunteers have donated over 86,000 pounds of food and have collected 7,500 coats which have been provided to local nonprofit organizations for needy families.

In addition, over 93,293 Student Service Learning (SSL) hours have been recorded, equaling a taxpayer savings of approximately \$2,197,983.08. The Independent Sector (<https://independentsector.org/>) established the value of volunteer hours for 2018 as \$24.69. For continuity, we averaged our savings at \$23.56 (2004-2018). The State of Maryland require students to earn 75 SSL credits before high school graduation.

Empowerment

The goal of increasing voter turnout, voter registration, voter education and voter preparation have been achieved through the Future Vote Initiative.

Many needy families in the community have been helped by donations of food and coats and by the knowledge that they live in a County full of caring individuals that put service above self.

The youth have been truly inspired by the level of enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by the Board of Elections' volunteers and staff. In addition, a new community network of willing, capable and passionate volunteers who aim to make a difference has been created. Whether working at the polls, handling large volumes of correspondence, participating as election judges, or performing a multitude of other responsibilities, they selflessly give of their time and talents. The level of participation and commitment continues to increase among the volunteers due to many returning families that find this an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

An inclusive environment has been created where all families are welcome to participate to promote democracy regardless of their status (U.S. born, naturalized and/or residents). The Initiative sets the model of public service at its best exposing Montgomery County families and youth to Democracy via Election Day coordination and implementation from beginning to end. Possibly the only all-encompassing *program in existence within the United States and/or globally.*

Election Judge Recruitment of students 16-18 years of age

Maryland Election law allows minors who are 16 years old to register and be appointed to serve as an election judge if the minor demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the State Board, that he or she meets all qualifications for registration in the State. Future Vote Election Judges have bolstered the pool of judges and helped meet Section 203 of the 1975 Voter Rights Act. The program injects energetic students who both tech savvy and many of which possess bilingual capabilities.

Since the onset of Future Vote, over 10,00 Future Vote Ambassadors have served as election judge. This year, a concerted focus was made to target Future Vote Ambassadors to serve as election judges. During the Gubernatorial Election alone, 1,494 high school students served as election judges. Recruitment success is buttressed by community familiarity of the program, active participation by families/youth and a genuine desire to serve the community; especially when youth are promoted to Election Judge status at their 16th birthday.

Supplemental links/Info

Future Vote FAQ's:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/FrequentlyAskedQuestions/future-vote-faqs.html>

Too Young to Vote, Maryland Students Pitch in at the Polls (NBC4-Washington)

https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/politics/Too-Young-to-Vote-Maryland-Students-Pitch-in-at-the-Polls--499746951.html?fbclid=IwAR0J7_IjtDGqmVKC0ljwGSOI62EgvcIryy12nr2qHJ6iAXJgOGF44MRICc



Students help facilitate voting process (WHAG TV, Maryland)

<http://www.your4state.com/election/ylehq-maryland/students-help-facilitate-voting-process/606655133>



Students Participate in Future Vote Program (MyMCMedia)

<http://www.mymcmedia.org/students-participate-in-future-vote-program-video/>

<http://www.mymcmedia.org/students-have-a-front-row-seat-to-election-with-future-vote-program-photos/>



Vote: Unique Montgomery County program gets students involved in politics (Capitol News Service): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq5LTaxMkNc>



Students have front row seat to election with Future Vote Program (Photos)

<https://www.mymcmedia.org/students-have-a-front-row-seat-to-election-with-future-vote-program-photos/>



Students lend helping hand to Board of Elections

<https://www.localdvm.com/election/ylehq-maryland/students-lead-helping-hand-to-board-of-elections/591692091> (WHAG News)



Future vote program seeks students

<https://www.localdvm.com/news/i-270/future-vote-program-seeks-students/1417899037>

Future vote program seeks students

Board hopes to recruit around 2,000 students

By: Michael Gordon



Posted: Sep 04, 2018 07:14 PM EDT
Updated: Sep 04, 2018 07:14 PM EDT



Teenagers are learning at the polls (The Gazette Newspaper)

http://www.gazette.net/stories/11052008/bethnew235446_32495.shtml



Chris Rossi/The Gazette

Darnestown residents Nick, 12, and Anna Mariani, 14, are in the county's Future Vote Initiative. They volunteered to help voters at Jones Lane Elementary School in North Potomac on Tuesday.

Future Vote Voter Registration



REGISTER TO VOTE

Two easy ways to register:

- 1. Register to vote with your smartphone.**
Scan the QR code to the right or go to www.777vote.org > Register to Vote Online > and follow the website instructions
- 2. Register in person.**
Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School
October 9-12, 2018
Location: Main Office Hallway during lunch

Scan to Register



WHAT YOU NEED

- A Maryland driver's license, permit, or ID
- A Social Security Number



Future Vote Election Judge Recruitment Poster



The poster features a blue header with three circular logos: 'VOTE STUDENTS FOR LEADERS', the 'MONTGOMERY COUNTY MARYLAND' seal, and a gavel icon. Below the logos, a blue banner reads 'General Election (Tuesday, November 6, 2018) VOLUNTEER ON ELECTION DAY!'. The main text 'Earn Up To \$210 or 25 SSL Credits' is prominently displayed, with the numbers '210' filled with images of US dollar bills. A blue bar below this text says 'Two easy ways to apply:'. The first way is to use a smartphone to scan a QR code or visit www.777vote.org and follow the path: Election Worker > Election Worker Application > Apply Now. The second way is to register in person at Clarksburg High School on October 11-12, 2018, during lunch, in the Main Office Hallway. A QR code is provided for scanning. A box titled 'What You Need' lists requirements: a Maryland driver's license, permit, or ID, and a Social Security Number. The poster is decorated with Maryland state flags in the corners.

General Election (Tuesday, November 6, 2018)
VOLUNTEER ON ELECTION DAY!

Earn Up To
\$210
or 25 SSL Credits

Individuals must be U.S. citizens, registered to vote, live in Maryland and at least 16 years old. Voters with bilingual skills are encourage to apply.

Two easy ways to apply:

- 1. Use your smartphone. Scan the QR code below or go to:**
www.777vote.org > Election Worker > Election Worker Application > Apply Now
- 2. Register in person:** The Board of Elections is coming to:
Clarksburg High School
October 11-12, 2018
(During Lunch)
Location: Main Office Hallway

Scan to Apply



What You Need

- A Maryland driver's license, permit, or ID
- A Social Security Number

Pics

Teaching Future Vote Ambassadors how to demonstrate Ballot Marking Device & fill in ovals on paper ballot for Outreach.



Community Outreach & Empowerment



Special Needs Outreach & Empowerment



Special Needs Outreach & Empowerment



Helping at the Main Office



Helping at the Main Office



Sorting & testing auxiliary equipment



Sorting & testing auxiliary equipment



Election Judge Recruitment



Election Judge Recruitment



Future Vote Orientation



Election Judge Training



Biannual Food Drive



Biannual Coat Drive



Monday Night Precinct Set-up



Monday Night Precinct Set-up (Future Vote Ambassadors)



Monday Night Precinct Set-up (Future Vote Election Judges)



Election Day Service



Election Night Returns

Early Voting Tabulation



Provisional Ballot Intake & Count



Electronic Poll Book (EPB) Intake



Electronic Poll Book (EPB) Intake

