

Whatcom

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS END-OF-YEAR REPORT

2020

Report prepared by
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The Office of
**Student Life and
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ASWCC VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

Whatcom Community College (WCC) is a nationally and regionally accredited institution located in Bellingham, WA, that serves approximately 11,000 students annually and offers transfer degrees, professional-technical training programs, as well as basic education, job skills, and Community & Continuing Education classes. WCC's mission is to contribute to the vitality of its communities by providing quality education in academic transfer, professional-technical, and lifelong learning, preparing students for active citizenship in a global society (Whatcom Community College, 2021).

At Whatcom Community College, the Office of Student Life and Development (OSLD) and the Associated Students of Whatcom Community College (ASWCC), provide strategic leadership for civic engagement efforts. The ASWCC Civic Engagement leadership team strives to advocate for students by creating a campus community where students can be involved in meaningful and impactful legislative affairs. While OSLD has a strong history of supporting the ASWCC in civic engagement and legislative activities in Washington State, these efforts have taken on renewed strength in the past three years with leadership from the ASWCC Executive Board.



ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership Team

During ASWCC Leadership Summer Training in September 2020, the OSLD placed significant emphasis on reviewing the ASWCC Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan, as well as the urgency of implementing student-led voter education and voter registration initiatives at the top of fall quarter. At the beginning of Fall 2020, the ASWCC Executive Board, the main governing body for the ASWCC, identified the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team as an ad hoc committee to lead the Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan. This team consisted of 11 members that met weekly and served as the point of tracking all initiatives and strategies related to the action plan.

Working members of the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team, led by the ASWCC Civic Engagement Fellow, included members of the ASWCC Executive Board which consists of the ASWCC President, ASWCC Executive Vice President, and ASWCC Vice President for Social and Educational Programming. The Director and Associate Director for Student Life and Development serve as advisors to the Leadership Team.

Navigating COVID-19

This past year of navigating life during the global health pandemic of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) presented many challenges for student engagement. The rapid changes in day-to-day operations, including the transition of classes to virtual platforms and all staff working from home, created a need for new and unique strategies to keep students engaged. The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team focused on enhancing partnerships and virtual efforts, including zoom events, social media campaigns, and utilizing the college webpage to fulfill the goals within the Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan.

ASWCC Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan Goals

The 2020 ASWCC Voter Friendly Campus Action plan was driven by four goals that help increase student interest in democratic engagement and civic learning. The goals state that by fall 2020, the ASWCC must:

1. Put legislative affairs in the forefront of student government work
2. Find new ways to engage students civically due to the current online environment
3. Work to enhance visible support from WCC staff, faculty, and administration
4. Seek continued support of the League of Women's Voters Bellingham/Whatcom County (LWVBWC)

ASWCC VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS ACTION PLAN COALITION

To kick off the campus efforts in fulfilling the fall 2020 WCC Voter Friendly Campus Action plan, the Office of Student Life and Development (OSLD) applied for a Civic Student Leader Fellowship. The Student Civic Leader Fellowship Program is made possible by the Washington State Legislature, and through a grant to WA State colleges and universities by Washington Campus Compact.

The application was successful, and the team received a \$5,000 grant to hire an additional student leader to work with the ASWCC Executive Board and lead civic engagement efforts on campus. This Fellow, along with members of the ASWCC Executive Board, the Director for Student Life and Development, and a member of the League of Women Voters Bellingham/Whatcom County (LWVBWC) created a coalition called the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team. Although the 2020 Voter Friendly Action Plan efforts were led primarily by this team, the coalition made efforts to build various collaborative partnerships to increase student interest in democratic engagement and civic learning.

WCC Campus Partners

In addition to working with members of the ASWCC Executive Board and Programming and Diversity Board, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Team worked with internal WCC Partners such as the Simpson Intercultural Center Peer Navigators to host events to increase civic engagement. The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team also partnered with various WCC Faculty and Staff to host events and activities. For example, the WCC Campus Safety and Security team was instrumental in providing COVID – 19 safety guidelines for “Light up the Vote” programming, and the WCC Communications and Marketing Department and WCC Foundation was critical in the communications around the Orca Food Pantry fundraiser. WCC faculty widely played a critical role in promoting events and providing information to students via CANVAS.

Community Partners

The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team worked closely with the League of Women Voters Bellingham/Whatcom County (LWVBWC) by renewing the pre-existing partnership with community members from the League of Women Voters. This was critical in helping the students learn how to navigate voting timelines and resources. Representatives from the LWVBWC were essential in helping implement a successful voter registration campaign and candidate forum. One LWVBWC representative, Paula Rotondi, attended most of the coalition meetings and provided invaluable insight on how to get students registered to vote, and provided students with non-partisan voter information.

ASWCC VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS ACTION PLAN ANALYSIS

In Fall 2020, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team focused on various strategies and initiatives to help boost voter registration, voter education, voter turnout and education about student voting rights on campus.

Voter Registration

In previous years, The ASWCC and OSLD hosted several on-campus events for the ASWCC Get Out the Vote campaign, including a Voter Registration Day and a Welcome Back BBQ, where ASWCC leadership shared voter education information and provided voter registration forms to new and continuing students. Additionally, the ASWCC leaders, in partnership with the LWVBWC, hosted ongoing tabling campaigns around campus to share voting information and to register as many students as possible from the beginning of the quarter until election day. However, due to the COVID-19 global health pandemic, WCC moved entirely online to remote learning and services. This required the 2020-21 ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team to find new and creative ways to connect with fellow students.

One of the main methods of connection was through social media. The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team posted voter education videos through the Office of Student Life Facebook and Instagram accounts. Team members and their campus partners created a timeline based on relevant voter registration and



What to do:

think best
 rity sleeve,
 box by 8:00 pm
 vember 3,
 g your ballot.

Drop Box Locations

Bellingham Locations:

- Whitman County Courthouse (in south parking lot or inside)
- Whitson Community College on campus (Boyer-Helber Center)
- Whitson Campus Place King Student Resource Center
- Wooden campus Justice Center
- Laggen Helene Village (Kumon's court of parking, etc.)

Acme Location:

- Acme Elementary School

Birch Bay Location:

- North Shore Fire & Rescue

Flaine Location:

- Flaine Library

Custer Location:

- Custer Elementary School

Deming Location:

- Deming Library

Everson Location:

- WCC parking lot

Ferndale Location:

- Ferndale City Hall

Kendall Location:

- North Fork Community Library parking lot

Lummi Location:

- Lummi Nation Admin. Building

Lynden Location:

- Lynden Library

Meridian Location:

- Laure Grange

Point Roberts Location:

- Point Roberts Community Center

Sudden Valley Location:

- Security Office (unattended)

Sumas Location:

- Sumas City Office

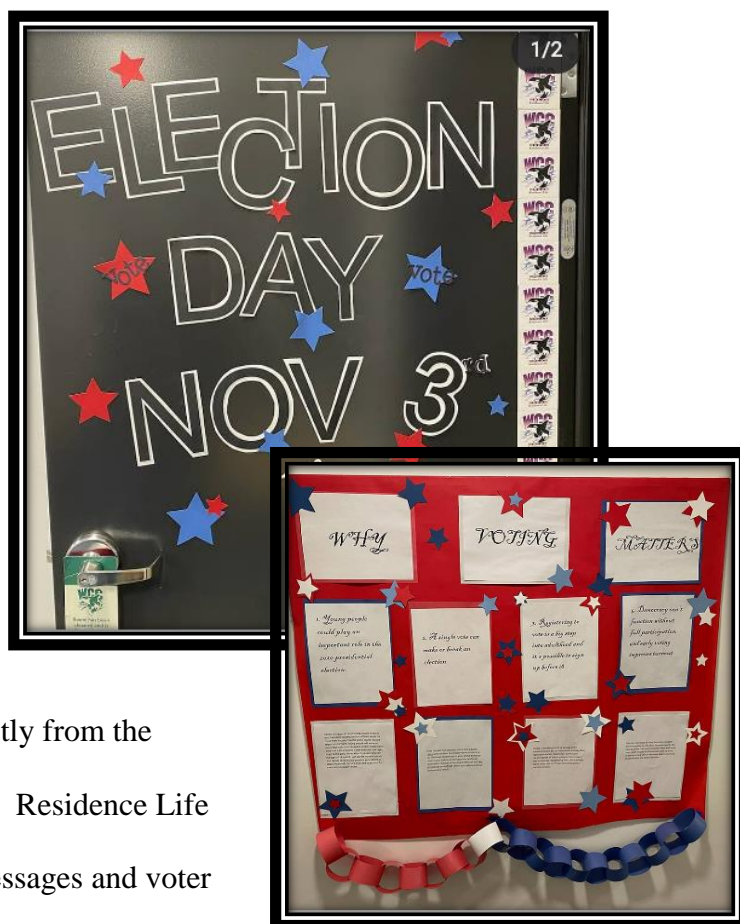
Office of Student Life and Development

No stamps needed. USPS recommends mailing your ballot by October 27.

voting dates. Student leaders each chose a voter education topic and created personalized videos introducing themselves to the campus community and briefly presenting important and timely information for voters to consider; The team also posted informational flyers and videos on these topics to the social media accounts. Social media posts included:

- Why voting is important posted on October 8, 2020,
- Online voter registration/address update and deadline posted on October 13, 2020
- How to drop ballots off posted on October 15, 2020
- How to print replacement ballots posted on October 20, 2020
- Where to find the ballot box closest to you posted on October 22, 2020
- Election day reminder posted on October 29, 2020

The OSRD social media analytics showed the social media posts were viewed 1,523 times and shared more than 14 times. WCC Athletics also sent out a video on their social media page titled “Use Your Voice and Vote” on October 23, 2020. In addition, the Athletics department shared information about ASWCC Get out the Vote and Orca Food Pantry fundraiser on their social media page. All Orca athletes were forwarded information about voter education events directly from the Director for Athletics and Campus Recreation. Residence Life staff also helped promote voter registration messages and voter



education events to 40 on-campus residents living in the newly opened residence hall. Bulletin Boards were created in the hall, reminding students of Election Day and why voting is important.

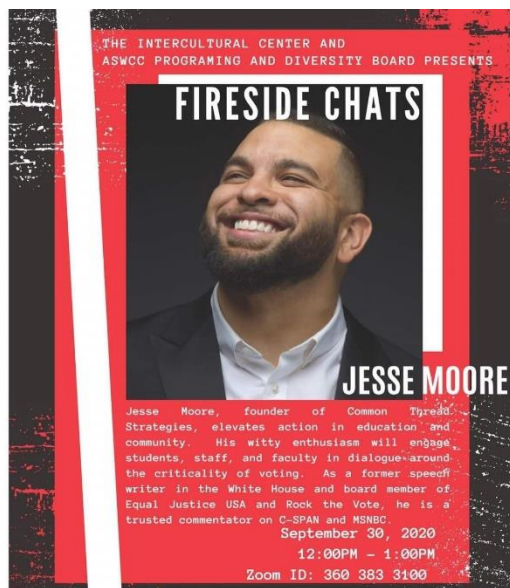
WCC faculty members across various academic departments assisted in raising voter registration awareness by posting announcements in their Canvas classrooms and reaching out to students encouraging them to vote. Multiple faculty members also reported providing extra credit points to students that attended voter education programming. Finally, staff members throughout the Student Services Division reported informing and providing staff, students, and community members with messages and information about voter registration and voter education via email and announcing the ASWCC Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan initiatives in division wide meetings.

Finally, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team used the college webpage to encourage Voter Registration. Through coordination with the WCC Communications and Marketing Department, the main WCC web page hosted a Voter Registration banner. Informational graphics were also posted to the Student Life and Development webpage throughout the voter education and election timeline.

Voter Education

The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team and campus partners hosted multiple virtual voter education events. The overall learning outcome of each event was to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus and mitigate barriers that inhibit students from being involved in the political process.

On September 30, 2020, the ASWCC Programming and Diversity Board and the Simpson Intercultural Center partnered to host a virtual event with special guest speaker Jesse Moore as part of a series of events that the IC titles “Fireside Chats.” Jesse Moore is the founder of



Common Thread Strategies, which elevates action in education and community. He also served as a former speech writer in the White House and board member of Equal Justice USA and Rock the Vote. Jesse has applied his leadership to roles such as Vice President for Civic Engagement at Rock the Vote, and Speechwriter and Associate Director of Public Engagement at the White House. He managed President Obama’s strategic partnerships with artists, celebrities and entertainment

leaders and led the branding effort around the President’s ‘My Brother’s Keeper’ (MBK) initiative in support of young men of color. Jesse engaged students, faculty and staff with his witty enthusiasm, bold advice for making change, and his broad knowledge and experience. Jesse served as the Communications Director for Human Services at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and as a public affair official at the Administration for Children and Families. 64 participants attended the event.

Starting on October 9, 2020, student leaders from the Simpson Intercultural Center also hosted a weekly series of events titled Workshops about Politics. The weekly events opened a fluid and respectful in-depth conversation about politics ranging from voting to climate change. The goal of each workshop was to put the power and definition back into democracy by educating WCC peers and leaders. To achieve this, the workshops sought to re-educate the

campus community on remaining active participants in a complex system. Staying active includes talking about relevant news events and finding solutions to problems locally and state/nation-wide. The hope was to see a motivated, strong campus willing to stand up to an unjust system and put power back into the people's hands. Workshop topics included voting 101 (how to register, deadlines for registering, and how to vote correctly), get to know your candidates (history of two-party system, history of candidates, and looking for endorsements), why your vote matters (voter suppression, history of candidates, and why you should vote), and third-party voting. The event featured various faculty speakers from WCC's History and Political Science department. 7 - 20 participants attended each event.

On October 16, 2020 ASWCC hosted a voter education zoom panel event titled "Let's Talk Voting" to help students learn how to get their voice heard during the pandemic by pre-registering and registering to vote. The panel was made up of four panelists, including Cecilia DeLeon, ASWCC Student Civic Leadership Fellow, Jenny Salazar, ASWCC Executive Board Member, Paula Rotondi, member and volunteer

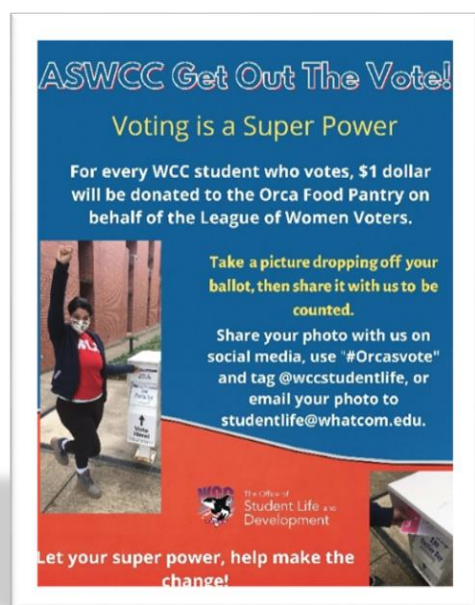


for League of Women Voters, and Justin Ericksen, English 101 Professor at WCC. During the event, the panelists were asked questions including, "Why is it important to vote?" and "What is something important students should know about voting?" The panelists mentioned pre-registering and Jenny, who pre-registered just this year, was able to share what her experience

was like and what she did to figure out the process. The panelists also discussed all deadlines and dates for registering in person vs online, updating voter registration, election day, last day to mail a ballot and more. Links were also given to students to help the registration process including VoteWa.gov. 18 participants attended the event.

Voter Turnout

The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team operated online due to constraints caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. This created a need to find unique methods of encouraging students to vote before election day. One of the unique strategies involved an opportunity to



increase voter turnout through donation incentives. A member of the Whatcom community contacted the team on behalf of the League of Women Voters about a donation incentive, in which the ASWCC would receive a dollar amount for every social media post showcasing WCC students, faculty, and staff voting. The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team was given the opportunity to decide how to utilize the funds raised through the campaign. The team decided to dedicate the

funds to the Orca Food Pantry due to rising food and financial insecurity needs among students on campus. Established in 2016, the Orca Food Pantry provides non-perishable food and hygiene products to combat student food insecurity at Whatcom. The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team created marketing materials informing students, faculty, staff, and community members to submit pictures of themselves dropping off their ballots or showcasing their 'I Voted' Sticker to the OSLD social media sites by tagging #OrcasVote or emailing the photo to

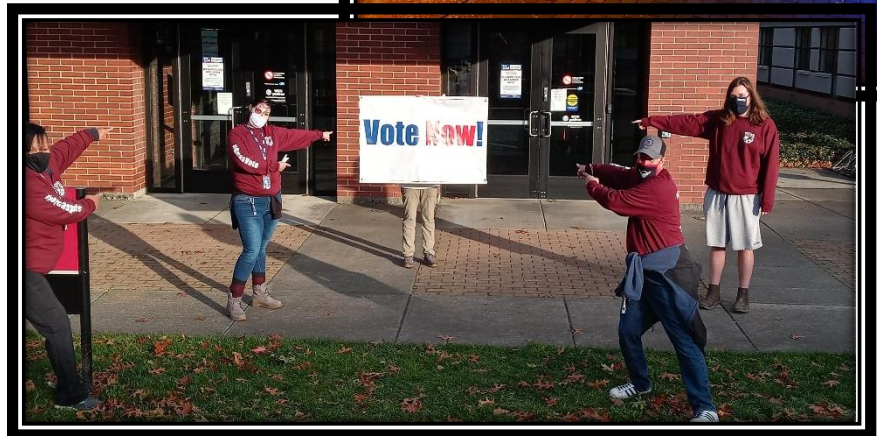
OSLD. 38 students, faculty, staff, and alumni participated by sharing photos of submitting their ballots and the campaign raised \$1008.

With guidance and approval from the WCC Campus Safety and Security Department and the WCC COVID-19 Response taskforce, the team received approval to host a socially distant

event titled “Light up the Vote” from October 28, 2020 - November 3, 2020. Members of the ASWCC leadership teams, and campus and community partners from the Simpson Intercultural Center and the League of Women Voters, volunteered to direct voters to the ballot box. In addition, the ASWCC

Programming and Diversity Board and Simpson

Intercultural Center partnered to purchase solar powered colored lights to light up the path to the ballot box at night. All event volunteers also



received custom made ‘Light Up the Vote’ sweatshirts to allow voters to easily identify volunteers. The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team strove to create a fun, engaging, and dynamic atmosphere. Therefore, volunteers took turns cheering and encouraging voters, held signage with reminders, and used pom-poms, music, and applause to liven the voter experience. Volunteers were not allowed to wear clothes with political affiliation, make partisan comments, comment, or inform voters who and what to vote for, nor stand within 10 feet of the ballot box;

this was to ensure the event remained non-partisan. Furthermore, volunteers were required to complete a daily COVID-19 health attestation, wear a mask at all times, stand 6-feet apart from individuals outside their household and avoid entering buildings without permission; all of these guidelines were in place for the event to adhere to state regulations, as well as state, county, and college and COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Student Voting Rights

Initiatives addressing student voting rights on WCC's campus were prevalent throughout all programming dedicated to voter education. Primary communication has centered on three main voter education topics: How to register if you are eligible to vote, how to pre-register if you will be eligible at age 18, and how to navigate resources in order to make sure that students have the tools they need to get their vote counted.

ASWCC VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS ACTION PLAN SUCCESS

Top Successes and Success Measures

The first success of the democratic engagement efforts involved enhanced collaboration between the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership Team and campus and community partners. The team was able to establish collaborative partnerships between students, WCC student services departments, WCC instruction, WCC administrative services, and community members. The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team met consistently each week to develop creative methods of increasing civic engagement. The coalition efforts broke down voter education effort silos between students, faculty, and campus departments. Due to the regularity of meetings and collaboration, the team was able to better communicate strategies and initiatives across campus. The partnership with the LWVBWC provided critical information that helped inform voter education, voter turnout, and students' voting rights. The evidence of the partnership success was

measured by a letter sent by the LWVBWC to the Whatcom Community College's Board of Trustees expressing appreciation to the college for its support of the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team's voter action plan and effort. According to the letter, Whatcom County had one of the highest rates of voter turnout in Washington State and it is believed that the ASWCC's innovative civic engagement work contributed to the high turnout rate. The letter was read publicly by the Trustee Chair Rebecca Johnson at the WCC Board of Trustees Meeting on January 13, 2021 (See Addendum A).

Secondly, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team and partners increased the number of opportunities for civic engagement on campus. Campus partners hosted an increased number of voter education opportunities than in previous years. In years past, the ASWCC has experienced success in voter education and registration initiatives in-person and on campus. Due to Covid19 restrictions and the WCC campus being closed for in-person classes and services, these efforts were not possible this year. Coming into fall 2020, the biggest questions that student leaders faced centered around how they could accomplish their civic engagement goals without the ability to be face-to-face with the student body on campus. Through much discussion and a review of what online resources were available, student leaders from the ASWCC government and student leaders in the Simpson Intercultural Center developed 6 virtual panels and workshops through Zoom. Attendance at these events included WCC students, faculty, and staff and engaged between 7 to 64 participants in each session. One really exciting example of success for the student led "Let's Talk Voting" zoom session was realizing the goal of building a panel with diverse perspectives on voter registration, ranging from first-time pre-registered voters, to WCC faculty and community members that had a lot of experience and wisdom to share about voter rights and the importance of voting, as well as a returning adult student who had recently

registered to vote for the very first time. Furthermore, every one of these events involved collaboration between students, faculty, staff, and community members.

In addition to the above mentioned successes, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team was thrilled about the success of our student-led “Light Up the Vote” event. Although the team did not count how many voters were served due to privacy concerns, the event addressed a real-life problem regarding ballot box accessibility. The event mitigated barriers to voting by serving as a response to multiple reports offering feedback to the campus regarding difficulties voters have experienced finding the ballot box in the past. Over a 7 day period, 21 students, faculty, staff, and community members, from the ASWCC Leadership teams (ASWCC Executive Board, ASWCC Programming and Diversity Board, and ASWCC Senate), the Simpson Intercultural Center, Office of Student Life and Development, and League of Women Voters Bellingham/Whatcom County volunteered for 58 shifts. This event also served as the first engagement opportunity on-campus since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Light Up the Vote highlighted Whatcom Community College as a beacon of hope and voter-friendly engagement in the middle of an incredibly challenging era of life.

Campus Climate

Whatcom Community College strongly embraces civic engagement as part of its mission and a vital component of preparing students to succeed in a diverse and pluralistic society. Furthermore, the civic engagement efforts strongly align with the college’s strategic plan dedicated to promoting student access through quality services and resources (Whatcom Community College, n.d.b).

Each year, in addition to the work that the college administration does to connect with regional representatives during statewide legislative advocacy events, the ASWCC student

government also actively participates in statewide legislative advocacy training and events. Through the Office of Student Life and Development, ASWCC student leaders network statewide with other Washington State Community and Technical College (CTC) student leaders at events sponsored by the Washington State Council for Unions and Student Programs (CUSP). Through these events, students learn why it's important to connect with local legislators to advocate for Washington state CTC student needs, how to reach out to legislators, how to build platforms to address statewide and local issues that impact CTC students, and how to craft their message when communicating with legislators. In addition to this student leadership development that occurs on an annual basis, WCC college leadership creates opportunities for students to engage with local, state and federal elected officials. Legislators are invited to visit campus on a regular basis and ASWCC leadership teams work with the WCC Special Assistant and Director for Government Affairs to meet with legislators who are invited to campus.

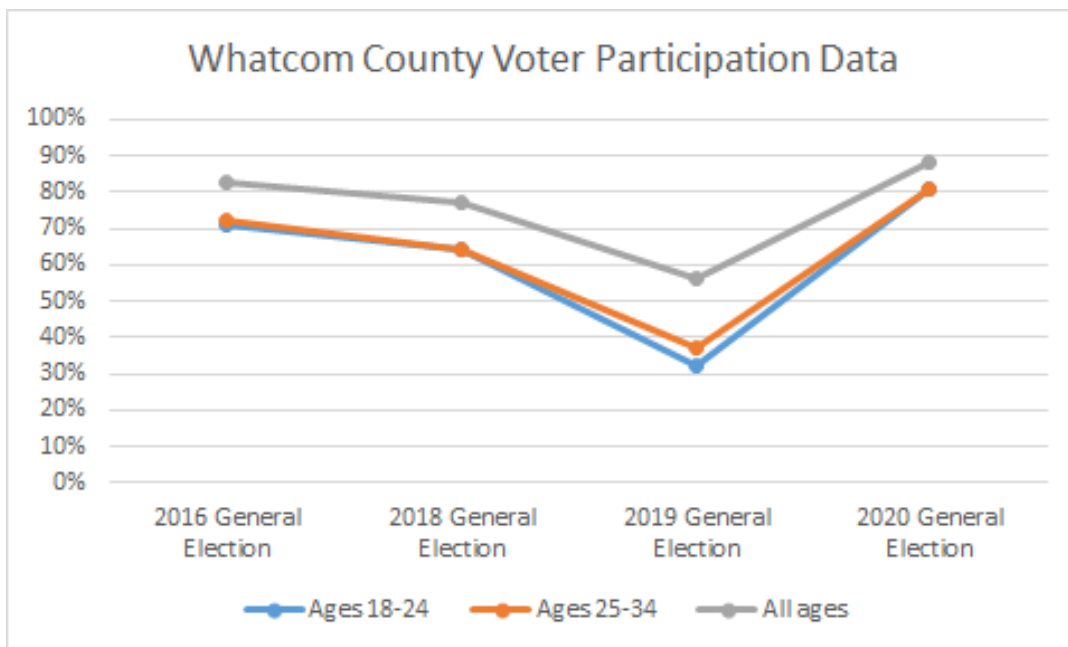
Reporting Success

The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team would like to host a campus forum to share an overview of this report, the fall 2020 civic engagement initiatives and strategies across campus, and the data around campus engagement from each initiative. In addition to that, being able to share with campus stakeholders how these initiatives may have assisted Whatcom County in voter turn-out numbers will be very exciting. In reporting these successes to our campus community, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team will also open preliminary conversations in building an even stronger coalition for fall 2021 civic engagement efforts.

The graph below highlights data from the Washington State Secretary of State Elections Division for Whatcom County in the last four years. Even though this year the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team was unable to track how many WCC students registered to vote

through the Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan initiatives, the Whatcom County voter participation data shows 87.9% of Whatcom County registered voters turned in their ballots.

The 2017-2018 Whatcom Community College (WCC) annual report shows the median age of a WCC student to be 24 (Whatcom Community College, n.d.a). The data below provides voter turnout for ages 18-24, ages 25-34, and, for a point of reference, the turnout for all age groups of voters combined.



Generally, in even numbered years, elections are for state and federal offices; in odd numbered years, elections are for local offices. Even year elections that include a Presidential election tend to have the highest voter participation. Odd year elections for local offices tend to have the lowest voter participation. In comparison to voter turnout for the 2016 General Election, Whatcom County voter turnout for the 2020 General Election increased by 5.4% for voters of all

ages combined (ages 18-64+); increased by 10.5% for voters ages 18-24; and increased by 8.9% for voters ages 25-34.

ASWCC VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS ACTION PLAN BARRIERS

Despite many achievements, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership Team faced difficulties as well. Although the team made significant attempts to partner with campus partners like the Simpson Intercultural Center, WCC Athletics, and Residence Life, the team struggled with regular attendance and communication of goals, projects, and plans for actual coalition building. At times, the lack of communication led to duplication of efforts around event planning.

In February 2020, Governor Jay Inslee issued a state of emergency for all counties across Washington State due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, (Proclamation No. 20-05). The 'stay home' order triggered businesses and educational institutions across the state to shut down most in-person operations. At Whatcom Community College, day-to-day operations, including the transition of classes to virtual platforms, forced all students and non-essential faculty and staff to work and learn from home. COVID-19 restrictions are an ongoing barrier for all engagement initiatives on campus. The state mandate for remote and online learning and work created challenges in the area of communication, planning, time management for task completion, and also advertising these activities to campus.

Another barrier to voter turnout on WCC's campus tends to center around the location of the Ballot drop box on campus. The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team received feedback that many students, faculty, staff, and community members have difficulty finding the Ballot drop box, particularly at night.

Overcoming Barriers

The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team is looking to engage the campus in ongoing conversations and to report fall 2020 successes with civic engagement initiatives. Through these early 2021 efforts, the team hopes to grow the coalition of folks on campus dedicated to voter education and registration for WCC students. These partnerships would provide greater breadth in communication to the campus community.

It is difficult to predict how long and to what extent Whatcom Community College and the Nation will experience barriers due to COVID-19. If the campus maintains day-to-day operations and functioning all or partly online in the fall of 2021, the team will be able to use the experience of navigating this barrier to be more effective in our online outreach to the campus community. However, if COVID-19 cases diminish and the state, county, and college restrictions loosen to allow the campus community to return in-person on campus, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership Team looks forward to bringing back previous in-person voter education and registration initiatives, and also to keep some new strategies developed this year.

Finally, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team would like to see the ballot drop box more accessible to all students and community members. The location of the ballot drop box has been a struggle for people to find and physically access since it is located in an unlit location between campus buildings, far from parking lots. Some students and staff report not knowing there is a ballot drop box on campus even though they frequently walk within a few yards of it. There is no signage anywhere pointing pedestrians or drivers to the box and according to the WCC Director for Safety and Security, the small parking lots closest to the ballot drop box become a safety concern due to the large number of drivers searching for parking. In November 2018, the Co-Presidents of the LWVBWC sent a letter to the Whatcom

County Auditor expressing concerns regarding WCC's ballot drop box location and suggested consideration of moving it to a more accessible site. The best permanent solution may be to install a new drive-up ballot drop box. Purchasing and installing a new ballot drop box is likely to cost several thousand dollars, thus necessitating a joint effort by all stakeholders possibly including the Whatcom County Auditor's Office, WCC, ASWCC, WCC Foundation, the Cordata Neighborhood Association, and LWVBWC.

The ASWCC hopes to ask for a meeting with representatives of all stakeholders to begin a dialogue to identify a location and install a new ballot drop box that is readily accessible to all.

Beyond 2020

The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership Team

Moving beyond 2020, the Coalition will continue to be led by the 2021-2022 ASWCC Student Leadership Team, and the OSLD Advisors. The team hopes to expand the coalition to include student leadership teams such as the Simpson Intercultural Center Student Staff, Pod Leaders, Learning Center Tutors, Residence Life Advisors, WCC Athletes, ASWCC Clubs, and more. The team also hopes to work collaboratively with faculty, and staff from other WCC departments that offer services which foster student success such as the Learning Center, the Career and Transfer Center, Entry and Advising, the Counseling Center, Access and Disability Services, Veterans Services, WorkFirst, Running Start, International Programs, and TRIO Programs.

The 2020-21 ASWCC Student Civic Leader Fellow will continue civic engagement work alongside the ASWCC Executive Board for the remainder of this academic year. There are 100 student-fellows at thirty-one colleges and universities in Washington State who are working to address critical issues on campus and in the community: food and housing insecurity, mental health, the opioid epidemic, the school-to-prison pipeline, and civic education. These fellows are

also part of a statewide learning community, and a smaller cohort of 7 to 10 students, that will bring together student-fellows, legislators, and community leaders throughout the year.

The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team also hopes to work with state and local legislators each year to provide local candidate forums and workshops allowing students and the greater campus community to learn about local candidates running for office and issues on the ballot.

WA State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Legislative Intern

This year WCC and ASWCC are happy to announce, DeMea Birdsong, is the new WA SBCTC Legislative Session Intern for the 2021 session. DaMea will be responsible for providing a student perspective on legislative issues and ensuring that students from the Washington Community and Technical College Student Association are represented and informed through the legislative session. DaMea will attend and participate in legislative committee hearings, monitor floor actions, write testimonies in the interest of the WACTC system, and recruit students to testify on college related bills virtually.

DaMea is a first-generation student majoring in Political Science. She is in her 3rd year at Whatcom Community College. DaMea showcased her passion and strengths for politics and civil service by facilitating fluid and respectful in-depth conversations about politics ranging from voting to climate change. She has shown a passion for re-educating her peers on remaining an active participant in a complex societal system. DaMea remains motivated to challenge unjust systems and put power back into the people's hands, particularly through civic engagement and activism. Her ultimate goal is to be a congresswoman that unifies broken communities, specifically low income, and minority communities, through reversing gentrification.

Continued Voter Education Programming

The Office of Student Life and Development and Simpson Intercultural Center will continue to host voter education programming on campus. Events like Workshops About Politics have continued after the 2020 election and included topics about racial equity, women in politics, presidential inauguration, immigration, WA state bills and legislative activities, and more. Furthermore, the ASWCC hosts regular discussions about various current issues in politics, and actions that impact the everyday lives of students. ASWCC leadership also participates in the Washington State Community and Technical College annual cycle of legislative training and advocacy events that are sponsored by the Council for Unions and Student Programs (CUSP). CUSP leadership provides training each spring and support for a statewide student council (the Washington Community and Technical College Student Association [WACTCSA]) to develop platforms, learn how to caucus, and identify the legislative action items that need to be addressed across Washington state for all CTC students (See Addendum B). Once the WACTCSA Legislative Action Agenda is identified, CUSP also provides training on what a bill is, how the legislature works, how to reach out to legislators, advocate for students, and craft their messages for advocacy day and ongoing interactions with regional and state legislators. The ASWCC will continue to actively participate in these state-level engagement and training opportunities.

The Legacy of Sustained ASWCC and LWVBWC Partnership

The League of Women Voters Bellingham/Whatcom County (LWVBWC) and the Associated Students of Whatcom Community College (ASWCC) have collaborated to increase civic engagement initiatives since 2018. Both the ASWCC leadership team and LWVBWC members have found this collaboration vital, productive, rewarding and inspiring to civic engagement efforts on campus. In years to come the ASWCC Civic Engagement Team looks

forward to again joining with the League of Women Voters Bellingham/Whatcom County (LWVBWC) for on-campus voter registration efforts. In addition to helping students register to vote through this initiative, ASWCC and LWVBWC will continue to engage in person to answer a broad range of questions pertaining to voting and address issues of voting access and equity. The team hopes this partnership will become stronger over time, empowering student voices to actively engage in efforts that influence policy and legislation that can directly impact the community.

ASWCC Get Out the Vote Social Media Campaign

The ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team will continue prioritizing social media campaigns related to civic engagement, legislative activities, and democratic learning throughout the academic year. Videos were popular on social media and allowed the college to share ASWCC initiatives with the broader community. Continued use of this strategy will help with voter education, engaging the student body with student leadership at the very start of the academic year, and continue to increase the number of students that pre-register and register to vote and raise awareness about critical legislative issues.

Light Up the Vote

This inaugural campus event was celebratory and uniting in nature and ASWCC would like to see the efforts become an annual occurrence to “Light Up the Vote”. It was a wonderful way to get people directed toward the ballot box, show non-partisan support for people getting out to get their vote counted, and recognize the efforts of those that voted. Ideally, the larger coalition referenced earlier in this document will craft a scheduled plan in order to make this presence on campus from the time ballots become available up until Election Day.

NATIONAL STUDY OF LEARNING, VOTING, AND ENGAGEMENT DATA

Whatcom Community College is not a participating campus for the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE). Therefore, the ASWCC Civic Engagement Leadership team did not receive the NSLVE report and cannot report on evaluation plans and future initiatives. Beyond 2020, the team may propose the opportunity to join NSLVE and respond to the U.S. Department of Education's call to action to the WCC administration and authorized signatory. (Tufts University, 2020)

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ADDENDUM A

League of Women Voters Bellingham/Whatcom County Letter to WCC Board of Trustees

*Officers*

Co- President
Allison Aurand

Co-President
Michael Jay

Vice President
Joy Monjure

Treasurer
Candice Ambrosio

Secretary
Janice Catrell

Directors

Robin Barker

Heather MacKay Brown

Julie Hubner

Gary Meader

Lorrie Melton

Shovia Muchirawehondo

Allison Williams

Dr. Kathi H. Hiyane-Brown
President, Whatcom Community College
237 W. Kellogg Road
Bellingham, WA 98226

December 7, 2020

Dr. Hiyane-Brown,

The League of Women Voters of Bellingham/Whatcom County (LWVBW) thanks Whatcom Community College for its support of ASWCC's civic engagement and Get-Out-The-Vote efforts during this challenging election cycle. ASWCC student government leaders developed multi-modal messaging that provided students with information on the importance of voting, explained steps for becoming an active voter, and provided students with voting resources. We are delighted to report that Whatcom County had one of the highest rates of voter turnout in Washington and it is likely ASWCC's innovative voter engagement work contributed to this high turnout rate.

Although many individuals were involved in this work, we would like to specifically acknowledge the work of Hannah Oliver (ASWCC President), Cecilia Deleon (ASWCC Student Civic Engagement Leadership Fellow), Kenny Johan (ASWCC Executive VP), Digo Aqilalwan (ASWCC VP for Social and Educational Programming), the entire ASWCC Student Government Executive Board as well as the ASWCC Programming and Diversity Board. The innovative and tireless efforts of these student government leaders informed, reminded, and encouraged active voter participation both on and off campus. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge Heidi Farani (Director for Student Life and Development) for her supervision of ASWCC and Raquel "Rocky" Vernola (Director of Safety & Security) for ensuring the safety and security of the campus for voters using WCC's ballot drop box.

We applaud the ASWCC, WCC faculty and staff who - in the midst of a contentious election and pandemic - developed and delivered essential voter information and created an environment of civic engagement and responsibility at WCC. We very much appreciate the willingness of ASWCC, faculty and staff to collaborate with LWVBW members in these activities. Thank you for WCC's commitment to the important goal of making every vote count.

Sincerely,



Allison Aurand
LWVBWC Co President



Michael Jay
LWVBWC Co President

cc: WCC: Heidi Farani, Director for Student Life and Development
Raquel Vernola, Director of Safety and Security

LWVBWC: Julie Hubner (Board Member and Voter Services)
Joy Monjure (Vice President)
Paula Rotondi (Voter Services)
Cam Kerst (Voter Services),

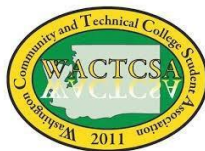
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ADDENDUM B

Washington Community and Technical College Student Association Legislative Action Agenda



Washington State Community & Technical College Student Association 2021 Legislative Session Agenda

The following issues were developed by CTC students. This agenda represents the issues Washington State Community & Technical College students have identified as their highest priorities for advocacy during the upcoming year.

Increase College Affordability and Financial Assistance For CTC Students

College affordability means more than paying for tuition. Additional factors such as textbook costs, housing, food, and utility bills impacts students' ability to attend college. While grateful for this resource, the Workforce Education Investment Act is estimated to help 110,000 students, this legislation was passed prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. The new economic phenomenon brought on by the pandemic, jeopardizes resources available to students. A high school diploma is no longer enough to give a person equal access to quality employment without a post-secondary education.

To meet this demand, every resident of Washington State should have an equitable opportunity to pursue higher education. This makes our workforce more competitive and strengthens our State's economy. The legislature should expand access to in-state tuition programs and adopt an innovative model that supports academic completion for CTC students, specifically, the Workforce Education Investment Act.

Increase Resources for Mental Health Counseling

Anxiety, depression, or mental health other conditions complicates a student's college experience. At some CTC colleges, over 50% of the cases served by the Disability Support Services office relate to mental health. Given the number of students with mental health issues, mental health counseling available at CTC's is inadequate. CTC students need access to increased mental health services while enrolled. We ask for funding for mental health treatment so colleges can do more to serve students with mental health needs. We propose that the Legislature increase the spending for community and technical colleges to a rate of \$6 million, allowing each college to have a counselor

to student ratio of at least 1,250:1.

Expanding the Working Child Connection Care Program

Lack of access to childcare is a problem in our state and may contribute to inequity among students with children. COVID-19 has exacerbated this problem. Many students struggle to find affordable childcare options, creating a barrier to beginning or finishing their education. The Working Child Connection Care Program helps low-income families pay for childcare. We ask for an expansion of the Working Child Connection Care Program, to give more families access to affordable childcare, allowing students to further their education and careers.

Issue Exploration

In addition to the legislative issues noted above, CTC students identified the following seven (7) issues, in no particular order, that association members could explore at the local level. (1) supporting part- and full-time faculty: increasing funding to hire full-time faculty, (2) funding Strengthening CTC training: saving the grant, (3) Homelessness in higher education: Support 22SB 5800 for colleges to support homeless students, (4) Increase the WASFA assistance for students, (5) Washington College Grant: Increasing funding or keeping the same funding level, (6) developing tech equity for CTC students: increase funding to all CTC's and (7) textbook affordability: Pass HB 1470.