



Civic and Voter Engagement
Action Plan
2022

Antelope Valley College

Voter Action Plan

Introduction

Antelope Valley College (AVC) is dedicated to encouraging students to exercise their right to participate in the democratic process. AVC has always been active in voter registration. The Dean of Student Life and Service has been registered with the State of California as the Voter Registration Liaison and has been engaged in voter registration through our Student Government Association for the past 20 years. Activities to register voters have been sponsored on campus each semester as well as there are links on numerous pages of our website for students to register to vote. We also hand out voter registration forms to students when they pick up their college diploma. Although we are active as a campus on this and other civic engagement activities, it was not until AB963 passed that brought together the team to work on a more comprehensive approach to voter and civic engagement.

With the success of the team, we created a voting campaign, "AVC Votes." Our goal is to encourage, support, and educate our campus community about civic engagement. We created a four-point approach to encourage civic engagement:

1) Encourage voter registration

a) Update our campus website to include helpful and easy to understand materials.

This will include clickable links that take students directly to state resources as well as other useful guides.

2) Reminders and Communication

a) Create a link for students to sign up for election and voting reminders. This way they can receive emails from the college with dates and instructions on how to cast their vote.

b) Utilize AVC social media platforms to share important dates and information.

- c) Announce election results once they are released. This can be done on the website, social media platforms and an email blast to students and staff.

3) Physical Presence

- a) Utilize volunteer students and/or staff to set up tables for students to pre-register to vote. Follow up with a separate tabling event where students can then cast their ballot.
- b) For students who would like to vote off campus, our volunteers/staff can provide a list and/or map of local voting stations. We will also include a link for polling stations as part of our state resources section on the website.

4) Panel to Discuss social, political, and economic issues

- a) Have guest speaker(s) discuss topics on politics that students may not have much knowledge on. Provide information to all by having guests who identify with different political parties come together and have a discussion.

The “AVC Votes” Campus Team

A committee was created to include faculty, staff, students, and community members who are committed to the democratic process and have a passion for people exercising their right to vote. The team for 2022 will include the following:

- Dr. Jill Zimmerman, Dean of Student Life and Services (Chair)
- Erica Reyes, Administrative Assistant to the Dean
- Paige Carter, Clerical III Student Life
- Kenya Johnson, Director of Student Activities and Community Outreach
- Michelle Hernandez, Director of First Year Experience
- Betsey Sanchez, Executive Director, Marketing & Public Information
- Tina Leisner McDermott, Communication Studies Faculty Member
- Nhe’Zhem Peoples, AVC Student and ASO President

- Rocio Rivera, SOAR and AVC Student, “GirlsBuild” President

Campus Team Mission

The mission for our team this upcoming year is to engage students more directly when it comes to voting. While we may not have had many elections this past year, we did communicate to students about the recall election of California State Governor, Gavin Newsom. Our county and state also have some elections coming in 2022. We have been successful in the past to get the word out about voting, but we want to increase our numbers when it comes to registering students and then getting them to vote. We hope a more hands-on approach by utilizing student volunteers will help us to provide the opportunity for students to check the box, literally, instead of instructing them how to go about it later. Sometimes people need the push to be able to take care of something right then and there or else it can be forgotten. We also want to show young voters and voters who come from underrepresented populations just how easily they can make a difference in our county, state, or country.

The Antelope Valley is represented by Los Angeles County’s 5th Supervisorial District. The results from L.A. County recall election are as follows¹:

Shall Gavin Newsom Be Recalled (Removed) From the Office of Governor?

	Votes	Percent
Yes	4,894,473	38.1%
No	7,944,092	61.9%

¹ Weber, S. N. (2021, September 14). Statement of Vote.

Top 10 Replacement Candidates:

Recall Election Gubernatorial Replacement Candidates	Votes	Percent
Larry A. Elder, REP	3,563,867	48.4%
Kevin Paffrath, DEM	706,778	9.6%
Kevin L. Faulconer, REP	590,346	8.0%
Brandon M. Ross, DEM	392,029	5.3%
John Cox, REP	305,095	4.1%
Kevin Kiley, REP	255,490	3.5%
Jacqueline McGowan, DEM	214,242	2.9%
Joel Ventresca, DEM	186,345	2.5%
Daniel Watts, DEM	167,355	2.3%
Holly L. Baade, DEM	92,218	1.3%

Summary of 2021 Action Completed

As a team we accomplished the follow activities:

- Updated Voter and Civic Engagement page under AVC website.
- Distributed a number of information flyers to students on recall election.
- Formed a 2022 action plan to host events and help make voting more accessible.

- Faculty members Tina Leisner McDermott's Honors class assignment focused on different aspects of voting and the speeches were shared publicly via a ZOOM link.
- AVC's "Umoja" Program under the Student Equity department held multiple "Porch Talk" sessions in 2021 to help create a casual space where students could come chat with each other, families, and community members about various topics. Two topics of conversation at these "porch talks" were "Your Voice Matters: Our History and Voting" and "What's a Down Ticket Candidate? What's a Down Ballot Race?". In addition, Umoja also held a Candid Conversation session called "Lift Every Voice: "The History and Importance of Voting".
- SOAR High School's "GirlsBuild" chapter, challenges young women from public middle and high schools across the country to make an impact in their community and ensure that their voices are heard. We believe young women will define the vision for what our schools, communities, and country can be, and that work starts now. Their focus is on voter registration and pre-registration of students 16 and 17 years of age. The goal of all the local Girl Build chapters was to have 10,000 new registrants.
- The Civic Engagement Committee was less active due to staffing changes and COVID.

Encourage voter registration

One of the main ways our campus targeted voter engagement was a mass information distribution on the California recall election. Flyers containing all pertinent California voter information and deadlines per the California Secretary of State website were dispersed both virtually and in person to meet the needs of all our students.

To continue to engage the campus community through a distanced learning environment our team repeated successful strategies from the year before. Faculty and staff were able to choose

to change their email signature to include important voter registration information. We also modified our website to include voting resources for students and the results of the recall election. This page continues to reference the California Secretary of State's voter information page in order to properly inform our community. We provided access to accurate election information about less well-known aspects of voting like state-wide propositions or county level judges who may be up for election. Debate coverage was also provided to help students make the most informed decisions possible.

Important dates related to civic engagement crossed our calendar during 2021:

- September 14, 2021 - California Gubernatorial Recall Election
- September 11, 2021 - "Patriot Day"
- September 17, 2021 - "Constitution Day"
- September 28, 2021 - National Voter Registration Day

This year AVC focused on promoting our statewide recall election. Our campus did recognize these other dates but on a smaller scale than previous years due to staffing changes. Our Associated Student Organization (ASO) used their funding for our annual Political Science essay competition. They presented the winner with their award for a job well done on promoting civic engagement.

Tina Leisner McDermott continued to advocate for civic engagement through her Public Speaking courses. Her students research topics related to voting, and any issue impacted by voting, for their informative speech assignment. Some examples of topics students choose to speak about are LGBTQIA+ rights, California ballot propositions, issues in the prison system, the Electoral College, Supreme Court cases, amendments to the Constitution, DACA, immigration issues, mail in ballots, women's fight for suffrage, age requirements for voting, etc.

Students who take this course learn the importance of voting and the impact of it on their lives from local, state, to federal policies. Throughout the semester, Professor McDermott continuously encouraged students to register to vote and shares any relevant links or voting information with her classes. Students in her classes consistently stated that they gained a greater awareness and appreciation for the importance of voting through this course.

Our special population, Umoja, Student Equity, Dreamer Center, First Year Experience and Second Year Experience all held events that focused on the recall election. Special activities were incorporated into these events. One of which was the history of special elections and past recalls in California. Students learned the importance of participating in these recall elections as they do not frequently occur.

Understanding the issues and candidates on the ballot

The SOAR GirlsBuild team discussed the propositions on the ballot as did the Associated Student Organization (ASO). They educated their student peers on why the recall was happening, what the information meant and why it was on the ballot. The Student Trustee created a video about the recall which aired on our AVC YouTube channel.

On-going civic engagement

The committee will continue to meet to discuss other civic engagement activities in the Spring 2022 semester as well as to work with faculty in finding additional ways to embed voter and civic engagement activities within the classroom.

Impact of the work

Ultimately the AVC Campus Team was able to successfully inform the community about voting and general election information. Whether it was an online voting rights seminar, a list of important voting dates and deadlines, or even presidential debate coverage, the team has worked to spread awareness throughout the campus. We held over 10 outreach events to students informing them how to access voting information and helped them to register. Through “GirlsBuild” and the help of our SOAR team we were also able to successfully help pre-register juniors and seniors of future California voters.

The success of the team supports our mission, and we were able to bring awareness to vote registration, issues and candidates and need to get out the vote.

Challenges- Voting and COVID

COVID-19 has undoubtedly been a factor in this year’s election cycle. While we continued to face some of the challenges from the previous year, our department and campus overall had staffing changes. This led to a delay in our normal routine as the new staff had to be trained on various topics including civic and voter engagement. Our students were also still experiencing zoom fatigue and a lack of engagement. Our institution did promote the recall election to our student body but due to there not being other elections it was a quieter year in terms of voting.

When looking ahead to 2022 our campus will be utilizing our Civic and Voter Engagement committee to highlight the following election cycles²:

² “2022 Scheduled Elections.” County of Los Angeles Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, 13 Dec. 2021.

Date	Election Type	Jurisdictions
April 12, 2022	General	City of Lancaster General Municipal
June 7, 2022	Consolidated District Elections	Statewide Direct Primary Election
November 8, 2022	General Election	Quartz Hill
	Health Districts	Antelope Valley
	Water Agencies	Antelope Valley-East Kern
	School Districts	Acton-Agua Dulce Unified
		Antelope Valley Community College
		Hughes-Elizabeth Lakes Union
		Keppel Union School
		Lancaster
		Palmdale
		Westside Union
		Palmdale City General Municipal