

SAN DIEGO MIRAMAR COLLEGE

Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan, 2022

Executive Summary

San Diego Miramar College is committed to advancing civic engagement among our students and increasing the number of students who register to vote and submit ballots to vote in primary, special, and general elections. San Diego Miramar College is equally committed to fulfilling the requirements of AB 963 and becoming a best-practice institution for civic engagement and voter participation. To that end, we have identified a Civic and Voter Empowerment Coordinator and formed an Action Plan Committee comprised of faculty, students, and administrators. We have also produced a Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan for 2022 and have several voter registration activities and get out the vote drives planned for both spring for the special and primary elections, and the fall general election. This report will be submitted to the Secretary of State's office by December 5, 2022.

Leadership

Civic and Voter Empowerment Coordinator:

Joseph Hankinson, Student Support Services Officer, jhankins@sdccd.edu

Action Plan Committee:

Allen Kuo, Associated Student Government President

Monica Lester, Associated Student Government Vice President

Stephen Quis, Public Information Officer

Angela Romero, Professor of Political Science

Nicolas Gehler, Athletics Director

Meredith McGill, Outreach and School Relations

Commitment

San Diego Miramar College actively supports student Civic Engagement and Empowerment, including the encouragement of the student vote. Years before the passage of AB 963, the Student Civic and Voter Empowerment Act, San Diego Miramar College regularly held Civic Engagement and Voter Registration events. Every year on or about September 17, Miramar College has celebrated Constitution Day by giving out copies of the Constitution and encouraging students to register to vote and to vote in upcoming elections. We also held separate Voter Registration Drives in spring/fall 2016, spring/fall 2018, spring/fall 2020, and we held several registration drives this spring, 2022, and will be continuing in the fall. We most certainly had voter registration drives before 2016, but that is as far back as can be verified.

To further Civic Engagement and Leadership, we also hosted a *Learn to Lead* workshop series fall 2016 through spring 2018. These workshops covered a variety of topics and examined leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr., Dolores Huerta, Benjamin Franklin, and Henry David Thoreau and the lessons they teach us about civic duties and responsibilities. Miramar College has further supported civic engagement by participating annually in the San Diego Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade in January and the San Diego Pride Parade in July. Many Miramar College students volunteer to support these events by participating in planning the theme and design of the floats, construction and assembling the float, and marching at the actual event.

Miramar College also provides many other volunteer opportunities through our Food Pantry and Drive-thru Food Distributions. Back in 2016, our food pantry was a small closet completely organized and run by student volunteers. Students invested hundreds of hours conducting food drives and staffing the food pantry to serve their community and ensure Miramar College had a resource for hungry students. Student Affairs recognized their hard work and determination and institutionalized the pantry in 2017 to stabilize staffing and hours. Our pantry is now located in a much larger space within the Basic Needs Resource Center, but it all started with student leaders being civically engaged. The pantry still provides volunteer opportunities for many students. During the Covid campus closure, we continued to provide donated food to hungry families through weekly drive-up distributions, and these activities relied heavily on the volunteer efforts of our students. Some clubs would volunteer as a club project, and other students would volunteer just to help the community. These student volunteers were encouraged to get involved with Associated Student Government and/or Campus Clubs.

Additionally, we have a very engaged Associated Student Government (ASG) that leads by example by volunteering for many voter registration drives, food distributions, and other campus activities. Students with a heart for service assist with planning and hosting large campus events, promoting civic empowerment through student government, and participating in campus shared governance committees. The ASG takes this involvement to the state capitol and has well attended cohorts at both the annual SSSCC leadership conference in Sacramento and the conference in Ontario. One of our past Associated Student Government presidents even ran for 2022 California State Assembly. In fall 2022, ten members of the ASG attended the CCCSAA Student Leadership Conference here in San Diego. We also have very engaged clubs on campus that host food and clothing drives, provide e-waste recycling, and one club even holds

science fairs at some of our local middle schools. The ASG is heavily involved in our Voter Engagement Plans for fall 2022.

One lesson learned from the 2020 election is the importance of creating a scannable QR code for students to access the Secretary of State's website and voter registration page. This will allow us to gain credit for the registrations we generate and to see the results on the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) website. In 2018 and 2020, we distributed the paper registration forms and directed students to the local registrar of voter's website for San Diego. Also, COVID prevented us from having on-campus events in 2020. Therefore, our outcomes from 2020 on the NSLVE website shows zero registrations for our college. We hope to establish a new base line this year.

Landscape

Miramar College has a very positive landscape for the furtherance of civic learning, political engagement, and voter participation in an environment that values cultural differences and strives for equity, justice, and inclusion. This can be seen in our mission statement:

“San Diego Miramar College's mission is to prepare students to succeed by providing quality instruction and services in an environment that supports and promotes success, diversity, inclusion, and equity with innovative programs and partnerships to facilitate student completion for degrees/certificates, transfer, workforce training, and/or career advancement.”

Several classes at Miramar College emphasize these important aspects of civic education, including Service Learning courses in Anthropology and Biology that require students to engage with the campus community.

We also have many classes that explore cultural similarities and differences in areas such as social dynamics and political expression, including History of United States Black Perspectives, Filipino American Experience, Cultural Geography, as well as classes in World Music and Cultural Foods. Other classes to focus on American society and politics are History of the United States, Women in United States History, Introduction to Public Administration, Contemporary Social Problems, Globalization and Social Change, and Introduction to Sustainability. In addition to these, our Political Science offerings are quite diverse with Introduction to Political Science, Introduction to American Government, American Political Development, Contemporary International Politics, and Comparative Politics.

Miramar College also trains Police Officers, Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians, and Paralegal Professionals to succeed in careers that directly engage and improve society. In addition to the hundreds of Miramar College graduates that have dedicated their lives to the service of others, a few over the years have gone on to become the Chief of Police, the Fire Chief, and even the Mayor of San Diego. Therefore we are very proud of the civic engagement landscape here at San Diego Miramar College.

Goals

Goal 1: Increase student voter registrations through events and education.

Goal 2: Improve civic engagement opportunities on campus for students.

Goal 3: Provide a safe and convenient polling place on campus.

Goal 4: Expand number of student voters through get-out-the-vote events.

Partnerships

San Diego Miramar College has partnered with the following agencies to receive training and/or resources:

- California Secretary of State's Office
- Band of Voters
- StudentVote.org
- Votes and Ballots
- Students Learn Students Vote
- Ask Every Student
- ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
- Voter Friendly Campus
- League of Women Voters of California
- Voters Edge California
- Student PIRGs
- San Diego Registrar of Voters

Action Steps and Strategy

San Diego Miramar College has already taken many action steps in spring 2022 for the local California Assembly District 80 Special Primary Election on April 5 and the June 7 Gubernatorial Primary Election. We created a special flier with a QR code to take students directly to the Secretary of State's website and the special voter registration page that allows students to select their college of attendance. This flier was sent by campus e-mail to all faculty and staff to announce or post in their classrooms. The QR code fliers have also been posted at

several locations on campus, and a prominent display has been set-up in the ASG window with large VOTE signs, the QR code flier, and a list of important dates.

Student voter registration was emphasized at each of our campus events hosted by either Student Affairs or Associated Student Government in the spring semester of 2022. Most notably we had events on April 20, May 4, May 18, and June 1 to reach out to students and remind them to register to vote and to vote. The April 20th event was combined with an ASG event for Earth Week and around 200 students attended. We had a table set-up with voter registration information and election dates. To entice more students to visit our table we gave out food from the Jet Fuel Food Pantry and free COVID tests. Upon asking, we found most of the students who were eligible to vote were already registered, which is really encouraging. For these registered students we emphasized the importance of returning their ballots and told them about the usefulness of voter guides.

Miramar College is an official Polling Place and the location is inside the Student Services building, giving students, faculty, and staff a convenient place to vote. The Polling Place is open June 4 through June 7 for the Primary Election. A final reminder e-mail was sent out on June 6 to inform everyone if they had not yet voted, or if they still needed to register, they could do both at our on-campus Polling Place. One of our student workers had never received his ballot in the mail, so we told him to go downstairs to the Polling Place and they were able to help him and he voted the same day. We will also be a Polling Place for the fall General Election for several days leading up to Election Day.

For the fall semester we updated our website with important dates leading up to the November 8 General Election, to include September 20: National Voter Registration Day; October 3—7: National Voter Education Week; October 23: National Vote Early Day,

November 7: National Election Hero Day, and November 8: General Election Day. We also updated our QR code flier that links directly to the Secretary of State's website so we can capture our registrations. In August, we had voter registration drives at our Farmers Market on the 17th and during our Fall Welcome Back event on the 23rd. We held an Election Event on September 19 to celebrate Constitution Day and informed people about National Voter Registration Day on September 20. We also encouraged students to register to vote at our Farmer's Markets on September 7, September 21, October 5 and October 19, as well as encouraging students to return ballots at our Associated Student Government Fall Fest on October 25 and 26. Prior to Election Day on November 8, we held a get out the vote drive on November 2, informing students about early voting, late registrations, polling places (including our own college), and how to utilize voter guides. We were even on Fox 5 San Diego, highlighting our on-campus polling place: <https://fox5sandiego.com/election/san-diego-colleges-universities-encouraging-students-to-voice-their-choice/>

We also used social media and our campus mailing list, as well as direct emails to students to inform our campus community about important dates like September 20, National Voter registration day; October 3—7, National Voter Education Week; October 23, National Vote Early Day; November 7, National Election Hero Day, and of course November 8, General Election Day. We expect these efforts increased the number of student voters registered at Miramar College and encouraged our student voters to Rock the Vote!

Reporting and Evaluation

Our final report will be submitted to the Secretary of State's office no later than December 5, 2022. When available, we will compile data from our outreach efforts and gather

information from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) to determine if our efforts were met with measurable outcomes. This data will inform our planning decisions for our 2024 Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan as we continue to strive towards the ultimate goal of getting everyone and especially all students to participate in local, state, and federal elections.