

WE ARE ALL WEST VIRGINIA

A Civics Education Program

By
Secretary of State
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How to become involved in your community's civic life as a young adult?

Get Informed!

Find out what issues are affecting the community you live in first. Pick up a local newspaper to find out the local issues in your town, schools, county and state. Local newspapers are an excellent first source for information. Looking beyond the newspaper you can read up in news magazines, go [online to news websites](#) or watch the [local news on television](#).

Often, representatives and candidates may hold local townhall meetings to discuss issues with citizens. This is a great event to attend to find out not only what others are thinking is important to the community and civic life, but also the representatives' and candidates' ideas as well.

Discuss the issues you think are important with your friends and family. These are the people who will take your opinion the most seriously and also offer their frank thoughts on issues as well.

Become a pollworker

A simple way to become involved as a young adult in the community and also get paid at the same time is to sign up for poll working on election days. Whenever an election is held, each county must hire anywhere from a hundred to nearly five hundred people to operate polling places.

County and Municipal Clerks are in charge of the hiring of poll workers for each election, so it is a good idea to [call them](#) and let them know you may be interested in working the polls on the next election day. Poll workers are selected by the County Executive Committee members so after you let the County or Municipal clerk know you are interested, give your political party's county executive committee a call as well. This is an excellent way to make solid contacts in the civic community and will look excellent on any resume for a job or school application.

Volunteer!!!

One of the best opportunities to become directly involved in the civic community is to volunteer and become part of a campaign. You can ask a candidate if he or she needs help with campaigning, or find a cause that you agree with and begin working with an organization that supports furthering said cause.

Many campaigns and candidates are always more than willing to take on a volunteer to support their work. It can be as easy as calling, emailing, or facebooking with the campaign to find out how you may get involved to help out.

It is especially rewarding if the campaign you volunteer for is able to bring about the change it is seeking. Volunteering on a campaign is another excellent addition to a resume or school application and shows that you are willing to put yourself out there for a cause your support.

Become a Candidate

Many young adults and students have become candidates for office in their hometowns and local communities and have actually won as well! In many West Virginia towns and cities the mayoral races often come down to a difference of less than fifty votes.

In Huntington, a Marshall student, Mr. Felington ran for the mayor's office and not only won his first election but was reelected four years later. Tashua Allman graduated from Glenville State College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History with a concentration in Political Science. One month later, on June 9th, 2009 Allman was elected Mayor of the city of Glenville. As you can see, with a little bit of hard work and getting people out to the polls, you may readily accomplish becoming elected to a city government position.

Get with a Program!!

There are many different programs out there that will help educate and prepare you to become a civically engaged individual in your community. Whether you are simply interested in politics, hope to someday work in government, or want to someday be a candidate for office these programs will help lead you in the right direction.

If your program is not listed below, please send an email to outreach@wvsos.com to have your organization represented.

4-H- Through camp, club, and special-project activities, 4-H brings positive youth development activities to one out of every four West Virginia youths.

Mountaineer Boys State- American Legion Boys State is among the most respected educational programs of government instruction for high school students. Each participant becomes a part of the operation of his city, county and state government.

Girls State- American Legion Auxiliary Girls State is a nonpartisan program that teaches young women responsible citizenship and love for God and Country.

HI-Y- Engaging youth in positive actions to influence the life and work of our homes, schools and communities.

Youth In government- Enables high school students to learn the role and process of state government. Students learn by serving as Legislators, Supreme Court Justices, Officers, Lobbyists, Press, or Page delegates to the Model Legislature and Supreme Court

Model United Nations- students become ambassadors for a nation, research the world situation, research your nation's interests, represent your nation's views in Council and General Assembly, and make new friends from other communities and states.

We the People- Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles and have opportunities to evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues.

United States Senate Youth Program- The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) is an intensive week-long educational experience and scholarship sponsored by the United States Senate for outstanding high school students who are interested in pursuing careers in public service. If you are a high school junior or senior already serving as an elected official in your student body or other state or community organization, you may already be qualified to [apply](#).

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