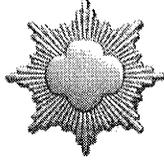


"I THINK...I CARE...I VOTE...AND SO SHOULD YOU!"

A GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD TAKE-ACTION PROJECT



BY NATALIE DOGGETT

AMBASSADOR GIRL SCOUT TROOP 51064, AND CLASS OF 2013, NEWPORT HIGH SCHOOL

Address: 11659 SE 58th Street, Bellevue WA 98006 Phone: 425-786-7057

E-mail: nat_pat_d@earthlink.net or ndoggett@regis.edu

PROJECT TIMELINE:

After my project proposal was approved by Girl Scouts of Western WA, I began in August 2012 and completed the project in August 2013. I spent over 92 hours on my project after approval. I was awarded the Gold Award in September 2013 after I left for college at Regis University in Denver. My Gold Award pin will be presented on March 3, 2014 at Bellevue City Hall by Ms. Brittany Byrd, Troop Program Manager for Girl Scouts of Western Washington.

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

Since 18 year olds were given the right to vote in 1971, the percentage of those eligible who actually vote has been roughly 50% in contrast with 60-70% for older age groups. The youth voting participation rate has been consistently less than that of older voters and has been steadily declining. That being said, young voters will inherit the problems caused by the current partisan gridlock and should therefore be actively involved in the political process to ensure that solutions proposed by politicians take into consideration the long term and not just a quick fix that will ensure their reelection. I believe an educated and engaged electorate will make sure policy makers are held accountable to providing for the long-term fiscal and environmental responsibility of the United States.

The two root causes of the lower voting rate among those who have recently become eligible to vote are: ignorance and apathy. Many of my peers are unaware of this privilege and their civic duty. This is exacerbated by the fact that many teenagers are more interested in pop culture and fleeting trends rather than important long-term issues that affect them such as future student loan rates and our nation's economic stability.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

For part of my Gold Award Take Action Project, I registered newly eligible voters at the six high schools across the Bellevue School District. Before setting out on my mission, I attended a training class run by the King County Department of Elections; I conducted a series of voter registration drives at football games, in the morning before classes began, and a weeklong voter registration drive at my own high school during both lunch periods. I networked with the League of Women Voters to seek assistance with my project, and addressed the League at one of their luncheons, where they were kind enough to honor me with an award.

I also made a motivational and instructional "How to Get Registered to Vote" video. I created a storyboard to plan the different scenes of the video, and created the video by shooting scenes on location throughout Washington. I filmed the Capitol Building in Olympia as well as public parks, a local fire department and even my high school. In the process, I have overcome obstacles such as learning new software and arranging interviews. I reached out to Matthew Fowler at the Department of Elections and was able to film my friend going through process as she actually got registered. I also interviewed the director of the King County Department of Elections, Sherril Huff, for the segment about why voting is important. I feel that her interview adds great impact to the message of my video. Copies of this video were presented to the History Department Chair at Newport High School for use in the US Government course taken by the senior class.

As a result of my Gold Award Take Action Project, 25 young adults who attended school in the Bellevue School District are registered voters. In addition, my Gold Award Take Action Project resulted in the production of a new piece of curricula which can be used throughout the Bellevue School District senior government classes to teach the importance of voting and to demonstrate how to register to vote. Also, many of those who registered to vote participated in the November election, which they had previously not considered doing.