

2024 Campus Mobilization Proposal

\$22 million, 6.3M students

VoteAmerica

[VoteAmerica](#) is a national nonpartisan 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that executes large-scale, research-driven campaigns dedicated to increasing voter turnout. Organizationally, we are tactic-agnostic and goal-oriented: we adopt and abandon tactics based on effectiveness. VoteAmerica also works with academics to evaluate our impact, and we share our research publicly. You can read our publications at research.voteamerica.org.

Debra Cleaver, CEO VoteAmerica



With over 20 years of leadership across seven election cycles, Debra has consistently been ahead of the curve in political strategy. Debra is celebrated for her relentless focus on making voting accessible and straightforward, rejecting outdated narratives about voter apathy. She has demonstrated an unparalleled ability to scale solutions that not only register voters but also drive them to participate in elections. She has pioneered numerous civic mobilization tactics now considered industry standard, like peer-to-peer SMS messaging, billboard advertising in competitive districts, and building voter registration into major consumer tech platforms.

She is a serial founder whose organizations include FutureVoter (2022), VoteAmerica (2020), ElectionDay.org (2018), Vote.org (2016), Long Distance Voter (2008), and Swing the State (2004). Debra is an alum of Pomona College and Y Combinator, and a former Draper Richards Kaplan Fellow for Social Entrepreneurship. She speaks frequently on issues impacting voter turnout, appearing at SXSW, Harvard Law, the Harvard School of Government, and University of Michigan. Debra's work has been featured in The New York Times, The Washington Post, MSNBC, C-SPAN, WIRED, Bloomberg, The BBC, Forbes, and more.

2024 Campus Mobilization Program

We are prepared to go big. Complete program investment means reaching 6.3M college students on 519 campuses across the country with a 4-week, 6-channel mobilization program that is scalable, cost-effective, and game-changing. Our campus program is not only the largest campus program in terms of students reached, it's also the least expensive per student and it scales with capital, not labor.

VoteAmerica delivers comprehensive coverage on campus in the form of digital takeovers, premium print ads, out-of-home advertisements, campus email integrations, transit ads, ad panels, and posters that mobilize students in the most crucial races across the country. We deliver informational messaging, a strategy backed by years of original research: telling students when to vote, where to go, what to bring, and who to contact if they need help.

We've been running this exact program for 7 years now, and have produced as high as 8 point boosts in turnout, depending on the amount of investment per student. This is an astonishing return: according to recent meta-analysis by Professor Christopher B. Mann, Ph.D., of Skidmore College, and Professor Katherine Haenschen, Ph.D., of Northeastern University, almost no other program produces more than 1 point boost in turnout.¹

Why It Works

- 38% percent of 18-24 year olds were enrolled in college or graduate school in 2023. If you're trying to reach this critical cohort of voters, campus is a good place to start. And because voting in 3 consecutive elections generally turns a young person into a consistent voter, this is a smart long-term investment.

¹ [A meta-analysis of voter mobilization tactics by electoral salience](#)

- The most common reasons students give for not voting is that they missed the registration deadline, or that they were registered back home and couldn't get to the polls, or that they did not know when, where, and how to vote. These informational barriers are the ones VoteAmerica clears with our voter education campaigns.
- College students trust and engage with campus media: 70% read campus news weekly, and 47% consider it their primary source for important events. This is the best way to reach them, because it eliminates challenges like address changes and ad-blocking.
- **VoteAmerica's research-backed program is *uniquely* trusted by campuses across the country to effectively address informational barriers for students and delivers a 2-8 point boost in turnout.**

2024 Campus Mobilization Program Details

With complete funding in place, we can directly engage more than 6.3M college students on 519 campuses across the country using a 4-week, 6-channel mobilization program. *Early funding* would give us time to run a first flight focused on voter registration (students who register using their school address are significantly more likely to actually vote) and a second flight focused on turnout.

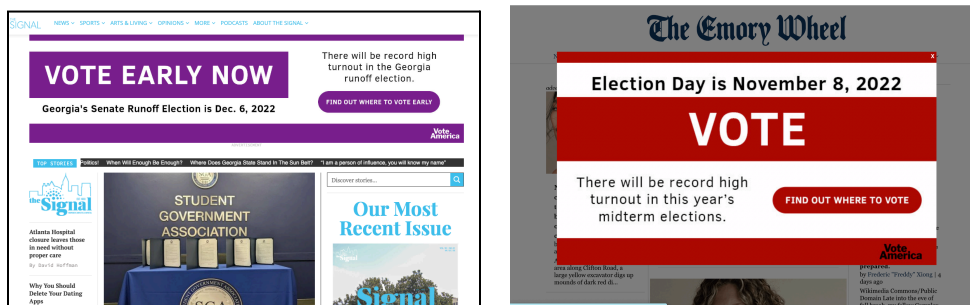
Sample Media Inventory:

- Full-page ads in campus newspapers
- Digital takeovers of campus websites
- Email newsletters
- On-campus transit ads
- On-campus billboards
- On-campus "posters" which are 11x17 and can be used to quickly cover a campus

Sample Campuses:

	CD Points	District	Students
Spelman College	40	GA-05	2,207
Grand Canyon University	96	AZ-03	103,427
Harrisburg Area Community College	70	PA-10	15,376

Sample Creative:



*Students don't need to be convinced to vote; they need to be taught to vote. The most common reasons students give for not voting is that they missed the registration deadline, or that they were registered back home and couldn't get to the polls, or that they did not know when, where, and how to vote. These informational barriers are the ones VoteAmerica clears with our voter education campaigns.



*College students vote when issues they care about are on the ballot. 79% of students say they will vote in 2024 if it helps defend reproductive rights. We can identify local candidates and their positions while remaining nonpartisan.

Invest in a Proven Program with Impact

VoteAmerica provides comprehensive on campus air cover: this is a scalable, impactful, and battle-tested solution that has already paved the way for a new generation of voter engagement. We've built a system that measurably works, scales, and delivers cost-effective results across the nation. We can and should scale this up: it is possible to fully-saturate a campus with informational messaging that is proven to increase turnout (including the most essential: Election Day is November 5, 2024).

We're poised to make a transformative impact this cycle, engaging 6.3M students nationwide with a \$22 million investment. Here's a clear overview of how, with your help, we plan to invest:

	Campuses	# of Students	Total Program Cost
Presidential	257	3.1M	\$11.5M
Senate competitive	218	2.8M	\$9.9M
House competitive	148	1.5M	\$5.4M
Governor competitive	55	593K	\$2.3M
Abortion ballot measures	229	3.2M	\$8.3M
All target campuses	519	6.3M	\$22M

Reach out if you'd like a state by state breakdown (from \$50k to \$3M).

As a 501(c)(3) organization, VoteAmerica ensures that your contributions are tax-deductible and undisclosed. To discuss how you can make a strategic and lasting impact, reach out to Debra Cleaver at finance@voteamerica.com.

Please see the appendix for *Program Milestones and Impact*, and more on *Why invest in college students?*, and *Why on-campus media?*.

Appendix

Campus Program Milestones and Impact

- In 2018, we placed full color, full page ads on the back of 580 college newspapers for one week. Turnout on these campuses was 2 percentage points higher than on our control campuses.[2]
- In 2019, we launched a 12-week multi-channel program on 33 campuses in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Kentucky as a randomized control trial (RCT) in partnership with Chris Mann, PhD and saw an 8 point increase in turnout on our target campuses. [3]
- In 2020, we brought this program to 243 campuses across 29 states, reaching over 2.8 million students. While the focus was on 7 states with key federal or statewide elections, we also targeted house districts with competitive elections and ran mobilization programs on 94 out of 107 HBCUs. This was the largest campus mobilization program of 2020. This program often ran instead of field programs, as COVID rendered field programs almost nonexistent in 2020. In a survey conducted by Pantheon Analytics, we found a direct correlation between ad-spending (amount spent per student), ad-recall, voting knowledge, and election motivation.[4]
- In 2022, we brought our multi-channel program to 52 campuses across 9 states and reached over 1.3 million students. This program ran in three flights: The first flight was a 1 week voter registration campaign that ran on 8 campuses. The second flight focused on get-out-the-vote messaging and ran for 2 weeks on 33 campuses via 3 campus media channels. The third and final flight ran during the final 5 days of the election on 25 campuses via 5 campus media channels. 2022 saw the second highest youth voter turnout in a midterm election in the last 3 decades.[5]
- In 2023, we ran this program in the April Wisconsin Supreme Court election. We did not endorse a candidate, though we emphasized which candidate was pro-choice and which was anti-choice to tap into research showing college students vote when issues they care about are on the ballot. This 1 week program ran on 24 campuses and reached over 233,000 students. In many wards that are home to campuses, voter turnout surged and was close to the levels seen in the previous year's midterm elections.[6] The Wisconsin Democratic Party identified this as an incredibly helpful part of the larger GOTV infrastructure.[7]
- In 2023, we also ran a program in Ohio's Issue 1 election. This 4 week program ran on 12 campuses and reached over 272,000 students. As part of this program, we ran a post-campaign survey and found that 85% of students recalled seeing our election-advertising on campus. Turnout among students who recalled the advertising was significantly higher than those who didn't (72% vs 64%).

Why invest in college students?

- College-age voters can make a statistical difference in voter turnout around the country.
- Of the 18.1 million people enrolled in college in 2023:
 - 15.2 million are enrolled in an undergraduate program;
 - 56% of students are female;
 - 49% of students are people of color; and
 - 7.6 million are under 24, and 2.2 million are under 30.
- 38% percent of 18-24 year olds were enrolled in college or graduate school in 2023.
- College students vote when issues they care about are on the ballot. 79% of students say they will vote in 2024 if it helps defend reproductive rights.
- Voting is habit forming: research shows that a young person who votes in 3 consecutive elections generally becomes a habitual and consistent voter (i.e. a lifetime voter).
- The most common reasons students give for not voting is that they missed the registration deadline, or that they were registered back home and couldn't not get to the polls, or that they did not know when, where, and how to vote. These informational barriers are the ones VoteAmerica clears with our voter education campaigns.
- A significant percent of students miss elections because they are registered to vote with their home address, not their campus address, and were unable to get home to vote. A 1979 Supreme Court case established that students have dual residency, and can register to vote on campus. Again, this is an informational barrier that VoteAmerica can clear. This year, we're also reviving [Countemore.us](https://countemore.us), a program that helps students decide whether to register back home or on campus by providing information where their vote may have the most impact.

Why on-campus media?

- College students can be difficult to reach with traditional GOTV messaging for a number of reasons: they change addresses frequently, they don't watch broadcast TV, and they block online ads.
 - 63% of Gen Z blocks ads online.[8]
 - 80% of 18-24 year olds always or often skip ads on Snapchat.[9]
 - 47% of adults 22 to 45 years old are watching absolutely no content on broadcast TV.[10]
- Yet, college students read and trust campus media. 70% of college students read their campus news sources on at least a weekly basis.[11] 47% of college students say their university newspaper or official campus communication platform is the primary way they learn about important events.
- VoteAmerica has extensive experience helping students decide where to register to vote. Campuses frequently deny organizations the ability to run "political" advertising, but as a nonpartisan organization with a long history of this work, VoteAmerica is singularly approved to deliver election information to students.

References:

[1] [Mann, Haenschen, 2023](#)

[2] [Blue Labs, 2018](#)

[3] [Flytedesk, 2019](#)

[4] [Pantheon, 2020](#)

[5] [Inside Higher Ed, 2022](#)

[6] [The Washington Post, 2023](#)

[7] They actually wanted to pay for the program, but their lawyers would not let them. So they made donor intros instead.

[8] [Adweek, 2024](#)

[9] [DigiDay, 2018](#)

[10] [AdAge, 2017](#)

[11] [DigiDay, 2018](#)