



**Blue Horseshoe**

A symbol of tradition  
and good fortune for  
Middle Tennessee State University

FOR WHOM WHO TOUCH THE BLUE HORSESHOE  
WILL BE GRANTED GOOD LUCK.

By the MTSU Student Activities  
Board and support provided  
to Industry Management  
in 1968.



**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**

STATE UNIVERSITY

# MTSU Campus Civic Engagement Action Plan 2022



American Democracy Project,  
MTSU's Center for Citizenship and Democracy,  
through the Office of the University Provost  
the University Honors College



# Commitment and Landscape

## Turbocharging Student Engagement, Expanding and Embedding Institutional Capacity

Our civic objectives at MTSU are big. Our goal is nothing less than the comprehensive, thoroughgoing realization of civic learning across the curriculum and the proactive, empowered, excited civic engagement of every student member of our campus community.

The campus work for expansion and institutionalization of civic learning and civic engagement throughout the university is multilayered, chronologically developing, and institutionally complex. Two key achievements in recent semesters have been the inclusion of

(1) responsible citizenship as one of in MTSU's top three university-wide strategic goals in our [2025 Quest for Success](#) and (2) civic learning in MTSU's newly rewritten, general education [True Blue Core Student Learning Outcomes](#).

These are concrete indicators of MTSU's commitment to civic learning and civic engagement and to the campus-wide landscape we are creating within and across every department, college, institute, center, office, and program of our university. This commitment grows yearly and continues to be implanted more and more deeply.

Begun years back through the Tennessee Board of Regents' interest in Wingspread, to MTSU's 2003 step with AASCU into the American Democracy Project inquiry, to our 2005 Quality Enhancement Plan that incorporated ADP and Experiential Learning, to Carnegie Engagement

Classification, to our MT Engage QEP, to the years of General Education re-design that have resulted in civic engagement/civic learning being incorporated into MTSU's General Education learning outcomes and course development objectives, to the "the three Cs" from *A Crucible Moment* now being the three goals of this university's Quest for Success, and most recently to the University President's addition of a new special assistant for Community Engagement and Inclusion—the structural institutionalization of civic learning and democratic engagement into the university life of Middle Tennessee State University is unquestionably embedded and continuing to embed.

Of course, there is still much to accomplish and expand upon, but the forward movement is measurable. We have made marked progress.

Our campus civic engagement action planning to further realize and develop our systemic objectives—including partner objectives strategically positioned across all programs, offices, and missions of the university—is truly the core of the campus civic mission, toward which all units of the university and the ADP center for citizenship and democracy work.

Just one small component of this collective effort is the university's shared commitment to nonpartisan democratic engagement toward increasing student voter registration, education, and turnout in national, state, and local elections.

This 2022 campus civic engagement action plan outlines Middle Tennessee State University's game plan for bettering ourselves, to build from the gains made in past election cycles and to continue to strengthen, increase, and educate for student voter registration, voter education, and student voter turnout in the 2022 midterm election.

Here's what we stated in informational emails sent out across campus and to our community partners last spring and this fall:

"According to the MTSU campus NSLVE data generated by the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education in 2021, 65% of MTSU students voted in the 2020 election. Not 100%. Not 80%. Only 65% of our students. And yet, that was huge growth forward, because in 2016 only 44% of MTSU students voted. The increase in 2020 was a 21-percentage-point jump!—a healthy move in the right direction. In 2018, only 38% of MTSU students voted in the midterm election. But that was actually a powerful 23-percentage-point improvement from the 2014 midterm, in

which only 15% of MTSU students voted—an embarrassingly low starting point. What is our campus’s participation goal for November 2022, to build on our trajectory of consistent improvement? Our true goal of course is that 100% of our students actively engage in the civic process and vote! Let’s work together for this critically important nonpartisan achievement for our students, our campus, our state, our nation, and our democracy.”

Since 2005, through MTSU’s office of the American Democracy Project for Civic Learning (ADP), Middle Tennessee State University has been proactive in developing, facilitating, and increasing student civic engagement and student voter participation. Over the years our tools have changed, our strategies have matured, and our hard work has yielded varying results.

Being part of the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) since 2014, we have been able to track our successes and our challenges more closely, which spurs us on. Equally important are the support, guidance, reinforcement, and partnerships between our university and other national programs we highly value. We are proud to work with AASCU, All-In Democracy Challenge, Civic Nation, Campus Vote Project, Fair Elections Center, Civic Influencers, Students Learn Students Vote, National Conference on Citizenship, and many other remarkable national initiatives. For them, we are sincerely appreciative.

We continually renew and reinvigorate our commitment and campus action planning thanks to student energy, ever-expanding involvement across campus, administrative determination, wonderful county and state partners, and the resources and guidance of our national partners who cheer our efforts and achievements and create for us a wider community. We are also now #MTSU Votes and #True Blue Voter.

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# Executive Summary

Middle Tennessee State University's 2022 Campus Civic Engagement Action Plan is the work of the American Democracy Project at MTSU, the university's center for citizenship and democracy that operates under the auspices of the Office of the University Provost and the University Honors College. In this action plan, Middle Tennessee State University's voting data from 2016 to 2020 are put into context; we discuss strategies for increasing civic participation among our students; we provide examples of how we promote civic education across our campus; we outline plans for the future of democratic engagement at MTSU; and we recognize our broad, essential, critically important campus leadership and campus coalition.

Our dedicated team of students, faculty, staff, and community volunteer put a tremendous amount of effort into registering new student voters, creating informational materials, and promoting civic engagement across our university. Our plan is implemented across our c. 20,000-student, LGI (locally governed institution) campus located in the geographic center (literally the heart) of the state of Tennessee. This action plan outlines our means and methods for doing so and how these strategies play a part in future initiatives and goals.

Our campus is fully in person in Fall 2022 but our efforts aim to reach and assist students both directly in person and across every electronic medium available to students as imperative points of contact.

# Student Voting Goal

Our MTSU student-voting goal for 2022 was, quite simply, to **better ourselves**. While we would love for 100% of our students to vote each fall — and we speak that goal aloud — MTSU is straightforwardly competing against itself.

In the spirit of energizing competition, we are part of the Conference USA Sports Voting Challenge, and we are running a side bet with WKU. We'd of course love to win both of those. But our true opponent is our own 2018 midterm voting percentage, when 37.7% of our student body voted. We'd very much like to best our presidential-election voting percentage of 2020, when 64.5% of our students voted.

Although national divisiveness and a lack of appetite for politics clouded the 2022 election cycle, democracy itself was explicitly on the ballot that fall, and that very concern was one of *the* civic drivers in November.

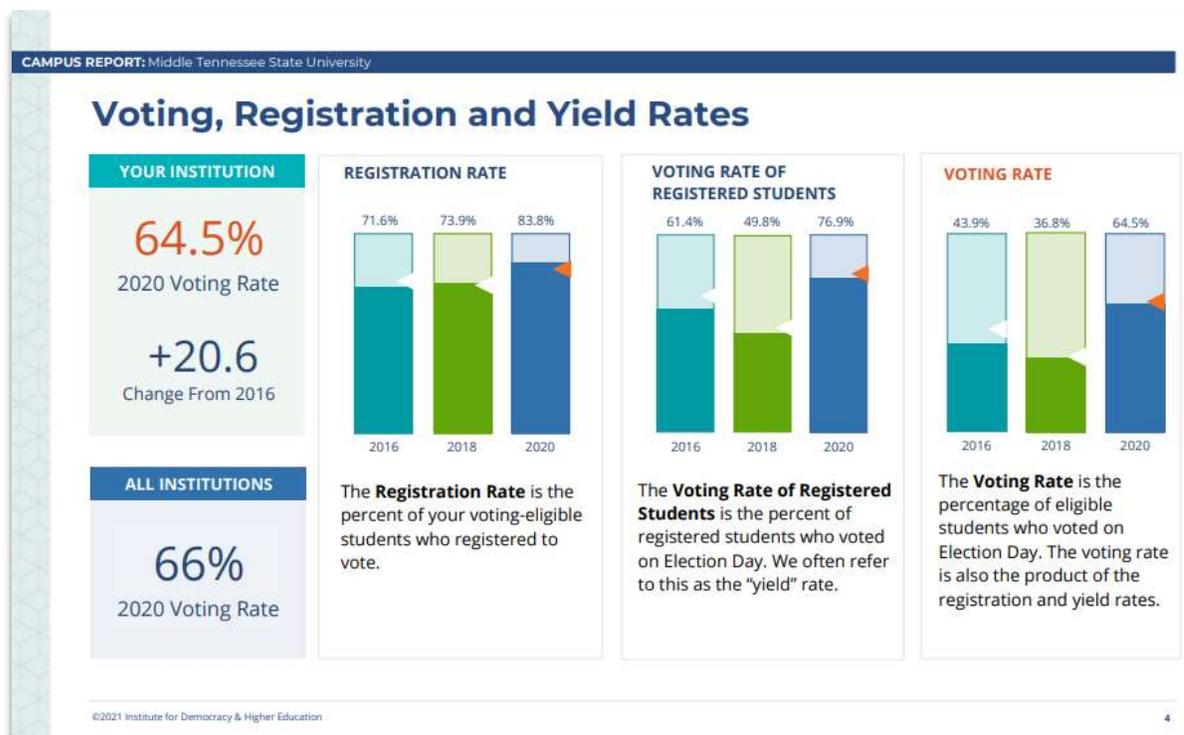
There was, per usual, national hand-wringing after the election, and MTSU's self-evaluation was part of that overall digestion of facts. We want and very much need to improve. Our university, like our state, does not attain even national participation *averages*. Nationwide and state of Tennessee voting restrictions impede increased success. Still, we strive for it. Universities seek to grow. NSLVE's remarkable data allow us the privilege and insight of true understanding about the voting engagement of the student body of our moderate-sized southern public university in Tennessee, and we choose to benefit from that knowledge.

Our university goals for citizenship and civic learning are being evaluated and assessed in multiple ways. How MTSU student voting can be a bellwether for and temperature-taker of those larger pedagogical and campus-culture goals is part of how we will assess this fall's ballot-exercise in civic engagement. Our pedagogical and campus-culture goals are the lens through which we study our student voting outcomes.

# Strategies

## Voter Registration

- In the 2020 election, MTSU students voted in unprecedented numbers.
- 65% MTSU student voter participation in 2020, compared to 44% in both 2016 and 2012. MTSU student voting jumped by over 20 percentage points!
- Registration also increased in 2020: 84% of our students were registered in 2020, up from 72% in 2016.
- A huge difference in 2020 was that, of the 84% who were registered to vote, 77% of them did, *versus* only 61% of our voter-registered students who voted in the 2016 election: We think getting more students registered where they could actually vote in person was the key to that increase.



Data provided by NSLVE.

All MTSU NSLVE data are publicly posted and available at [mtsu.edu/amerdem/NSLVE.php](https://mtsu.edu/amerdem/NSLVE.php).

## Means and Methods of Voter Registration

We are an **Ask Every Student** Commitment Campus. We work to institutionally embed the capacity to ask every student, directly, to register to vote. To get our students ready for the 2022 midterm elections, we had voter registration tables set up across campus every day from



the beginning of the Fall semester until the last day to register in Tennessee before the students' Fall Break (August 22<sup>nd</sup> through October 7<sup>th</sup>). What follows are some of our means to register voters and keep MTSU students informed about their civic responsibility to vote:

**Register to Vote!**

**MTSU hosts a Register to Vote! Button** [\(here\)](#) on almost all our office/departmental/college/program websites. Click on almost any mtsu.edu webpage and a direct link to our university's voter registration portal is immediately accessible.

**Register to Vote! in Pipeline** is prominently placed on the students' dashboard inside their daily-use Pipeline login.

**Our Register to Vote! button is also included with course registration** so that students see the button reminder and act on it internally every semester when registering for each upcoming semester's classes.

**Register to vote is customized for MTSU students.** Our register to vote portal asks specific questions that our students need to respond to about specific MTSU issues vis-à-vis voter registration. Our portal is very much a voter



**Register to Vote!**

education portal, to help students get registered where they can actually vote. We ask the same questions inside the portal that we ask when we talk about voting plans in person with each individual student.

Our **mtsu.edu/vote** short URL is the easy-access descriptor we've developed to verbally and in print get our students to our voter registration site quickly and simply. We of course also have a QR code for that purpose.



**Register to vote information is on course syllabi** at MTSU. ADP sends reminder emails through the Provost's office to all faculty in August before the fall semester starts, to be sure that the [mtsu.edu/vote](https://www.mtsu.edu/vote) link is entered into course syllabi. The Provost provides that information reminder to all faculty as well, on his [Suggested Syllabus Statements](#) website.

**MTSU websites** that provide students, faculty, and staff access to numerous online resources are plentiful. Just a couple of portals that are currently available via MTSU's website are <https://www.mtsu.edu/stuaff/vote.php> and <https://www.mtsu.edu/amerdem/register-to-vote.php>.



**MTSU voter registration tabling** begins at MTSU on the first day of classes in fall semester and runs every weekday through the last day of voter registration in Tennessee. Fall 2022, we held voter reg tables Aug. 22-Oct. 7—seven full weeks, under tents, outside, on major campus arteries, in many different locations, to connect with students operating in every quadrant of university life.

**National Voter Registration Month.** September, Voter Registration Month, right at the beginning of the school year, is when the Tennessee Secretary of State hosts a College Voter Registration Competition. MTSU chooses to participate vigorously to take advantage of that challenge as another tool, another carrot, and another incentive to elevate student voter registration during the active month of September.

**National Voter Registration Week.** During National Voter Registration Week, American Democracy Project MTSU hosts vigorous voter registration booths across campus and shares helpful registration information on all their social media platforms.

**National Voter Registration Day (NVRD):** MTSU is a NVRD partner institution through Campus Vote Project. In addition to on campus promotion, we promote NVRD on all media platforms well in advance to ensure the reach of the day is as effective as possible. In 2022 American Democracy Project partnered with the College of Media and Entertainment and SGA to host an all-day voter registration drive on the campus quad, including musical performances by CME showcase students and free swag giveaways. The day was a great success, and record numbers of MTSU students registered to vote on NVRD.



**#MTSUVotes and #GoVoteMTSU.** Since our Secretary of State asks us to post social media photographs of every voter registrant holding up #MTSU Votes and #GoVoteMTSU signage, we try to comply. If it's fun for students and encourages them to get registered, we're all for it.

**#1 in Campus Voter Registration** in Tennessee. We were named #1 of 48 Tennessee colleges and universities in the Tennessee Secretary of State's Campus Voter Registration Contest during National Voter Registration Month in 2018. Our goal is to earn this distinction again every academic year in which the competition is offered, and indeed, in [2022 MTSU won](#) again.

**Connection Point locations on campus:** Connection Point events are sponsored by the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership (CSIL), and #MTSUVotes invades them with voter registration at campus events, supported by student organizations who help sponsor the registration drive. Connection Point opportunities are set up across campus during the semester, and students receive different buttons that can be collected and placed on their backpacks. We have created various voter registration, ADP, and Constitution Day Connection Point buttons specific to MTSUVotes! work, and we push forward with these opportunities when we can throughout the state's voter registration period.

**Blue Raider Athletics voter registration** is ongoing with our MTSU sports teams. MTSU is in the Conference USA Voting Challenge, and we have also set up a one-on-one voting challenge with our nearby collegiate rival Western Kentucky University. Being sure our athletes are registered to vote is such an important step. Go Blue Raiders!

**Tabling on-campus during large events.** We set up registration tables throughout the fall at events such as home games with MTSU athletic teams, student organization events, MT Engage Week, Constitution Day events, and many more. These outreach locations, with outdoor tabling, enable us to reach broader subsets of students on campus at different times and locations.

**Early Arrival Programs.** MTSU's Scholars Academy and STAR programs welcome students to university early to increase their academic success and assist students to register to vote in the fall. These programs are other means to Ask Every Student during early arrival to get registered in order to be ready to vote later in the fall.

**University Studies** is the university's first-year program, overseen by University College, with whose faculty we partner to register new voters. University Studies faculty are among the university's most engaged and supportive faculty to assist their students in getting registered.

**Voter reg in classrooms.** Wherever ADP is invited to come to a specific class or activity to register student voters, we absolutely do.

**Presidium** is the MTSU retreat for all student organization officers. Our American Democracy Project student organization president, vice president, and treasurer attended Presidium in August to educate campus organization officers to Ask Every Student in their respective club, fraternity, or organization to register and vote. Our campus student orgs are active participants in voter registration, voter education, and getting out the student vote.

**Our social media campaigns** pushed voter registration all spring, summer, and fall 2022.

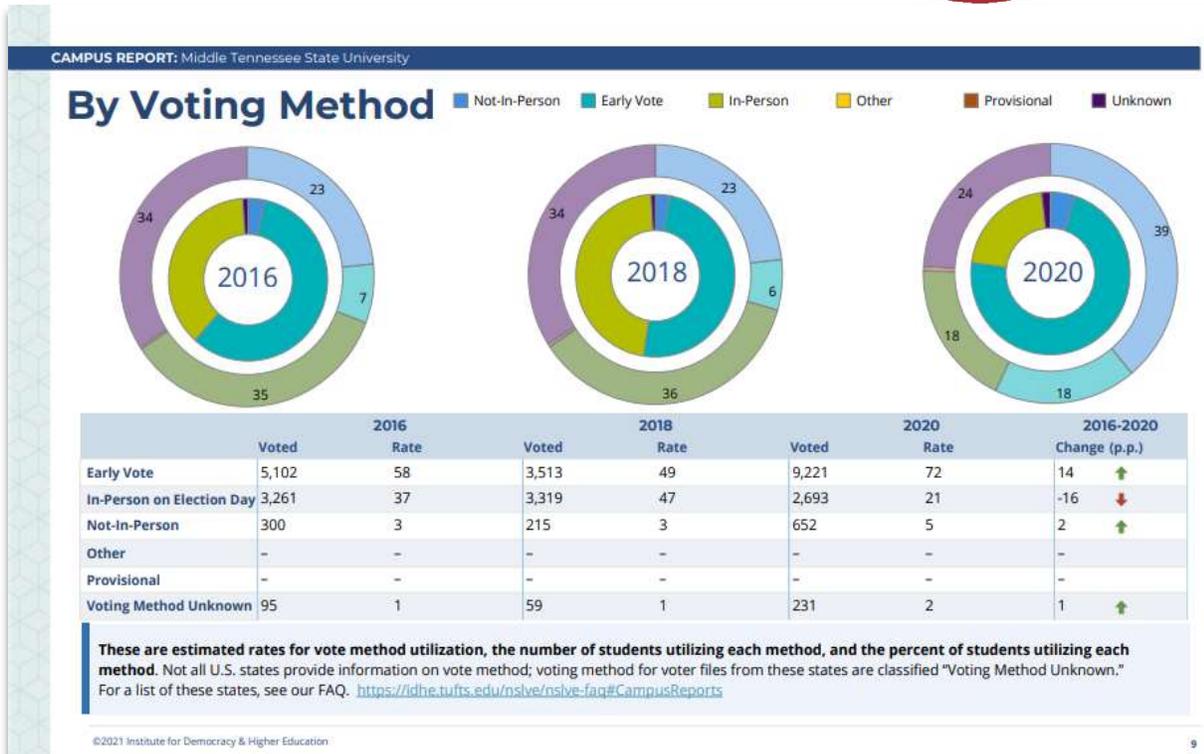
**Campus emails**—to faculty/staff and to students—were sent out as regular reminders about voter registration, deadlines, applying for absentee ballots, and basic voter-planning information. Registration increased after every email.

**Campus-wide texting** to students was made available to us this fall, for the very first time. We used texts as last-chance reminders of the Tennessee state voter registration deadline. The texting capability is proving to be a very powerful tool, for which we are most appreciative.



# Voter Education

**NSLVE** NATIONAL STUDY OF LEARNING, VOTING, AND ENGAGEMENT



**NSLVE.** Our partnership with the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement over the past election cycles has been a vital resource for our campus. We can track our improvements in voter registration across the campus, as well as identify barriers that are present, compare them to previous election cycles, and work to resolve them. NSLVE data are the backbone research tool on which we base voter registration and student voting efforts. NSLVE’s existence, information, and utility advance voter education since we use it to educate our campus community about our real lacunae and our objectives and to set our strategies for forward progress.



### **Tennessee Statewide Campus Civic Summit (TCCS).**

The statewide campus civic summit, held February 25-26 in 2022, was an in-person and virtual educational conference that brought together Tennessee's higher education institutions to learn and share best practices in student voting. It was an energizing think tank to get our campus—and all the Tennessee campuses—educated about the needs ahead in this election year. The day was loaded with guest lecturers and discussion

leaders, in which our national and state partners participated, including American Democracy Project, the Rutherford County Election Commission, the League of Women Voters of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County, All-In Democracy Challenge, Campus Vote Project, Students Learn Students Vote, and the Tennessee Campus Democracy Network. We created Civic Fellowships for the summit, and our 2022 Civic Fellows have played the primary role in petitioning our local county election commission to increase access to polling on campus. The 2022 Civic Fellows from the 2022 Summit are the backbone of our MTSU student voting work in all the months since.

**African American History Month.** African American History Month is the perfect opportunity to partner with the faculty and student leaders in Intercultural and Diversity Affairs (IDA) and the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership (CSIL) to engage in events to educate students in important race and social justice issues that have impacted, and continue to impact, student voting. We use the opportunity throughout the month of February to register more students to vote. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are critically important.

**Women's History Month.** In partnership with CSIL, the June Anderson Center for Women and Non-Traditional Students, and the Power of One, we table for voter registration during the WHM events.

**National Voter Education Week.** At MTSU we claimed October 17-21, 2022, as Voter Education Week. Posters went up all over campus (and on our website) with district maps, ballot issues, Tennessee constitutional amendments, and nonpartisan candidate guides. Some voting information was provided by guides.vote and much of it we developed ourselves.

**Ballot information posters** are posted all across campus and on our website through Election Day, which include Tennessee U.S. Congressional districts, Rutherford County State House and State Senate districts, nonpartisan candidate position guides, details about the four amendments to the Tennessee Constitution, and details about where and when to vote.

**Candidate forum moderators.** ADP works with the Murfreesboro/Rutherford County League of Women Voters, and we provided, from among our faculty, moderators for the League's public candidates. Forums were in person in 2022 and are posted for online viewing afterward.

**Main Street banner.** ADP MTSU hung a 25-ft. banner across Main Street in downtown Murfreesboro as a community service, to remind everyone in town of the imperative of voting and the important dates to remember.



**Absentee ballot information:** By-mail voting is already utilized by some of our students, and we actively educate students about the absentee ballot process and its deadlines. We have added an “Absentee Voting” tab on our [mtsu.edu/amerdem](http://mtsu.edu/amerdem) webpage that continues to be updated with valuable information for voters. We will assist students in requesting ballots, filling them out, and submitting them. We provide stamps and envelopes. We provide access to free Notaries Public on campus, for our students who need their ballots notarized.



**Sample ballots.** ADP provides a Rutherford County sample ballot on the ADP website for students to reference. We also created sample ballot yard signs that are posted around campus leading up to Election Day. An email link is provided on the webpage for any student who has questions about candidates or the ballot itself. Students have anxiety about what to expect at the polls. We provide information to help them feel more comfortable with the procedural details of voting.

**Calendar handouts.** We created a simplified election calendar to pass out to students with a breakdown of all the upcoming election dates, absentee ballot deadlines, etc. We will continue to create these calendars for future elections. All this information is made available online and sent out by social media as well.

#MTSU VOTES ELECTION CALENDAR 2022			
	Rutherford County, Republican & Democratic Primary	State & Federal Primary, Rutherford Co. General, & Murfreesboro City Municipal	State & Federal General, Eagleville, LaVergne & Smyrna Municipal Elections
VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE	<b>April 4th</b>	<b>July 5th</b>	<b>October 11th</b>
EARLY VOTING BEGINS	<b>April 13th</b>	<b>July 15th</b>	<b>October 19th</b>
ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST DEADLINE	<b>April 26th</b>	<b>July 28th</b>	<b>November 1st</b>
EARLY VOTING ENDS	<b>April 28th</b>	<b>July 30th</b>	<b>November 3rd</b>
<i>Election Day!</i>	May 3rd, 2022	August 4th, 2022	November 8th, 2022

[www.mtsu.edu/amerdem](http://www.mtsu.edu/amerdem)

# Constitution Week

**Constitution Week** is part of voter education. Every year we organize a campus-wide celebration of the Constitution and hold outdoor readings of the Constitution in front of every college on campus. We understand that knowledge about the U.S. Constitution is a critical foundation of voter education and for voter participation.



Constitution Week is an important week of the fall semester for our university and MTSU's American Democracy Project. We partner with the many colleges and university offices that are part of our coalition to host public readings of the Constitution across campus. The main event of the week is always a major program or panel discussion.

At MTSU's Tucker Theater, we host distinguished guest speakers who provide unique and informed perspectives for student discussion on issues of justice, equity, and access.

**Constitution Day**  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019  
2:30-4:00 P.M. TUCKER THEATRE  
**SUFFRAGISTS and CITIZENSHIP**

**Dr. Marjorie Spruill**  
Distinguished professor emerita, Distinguished Scholar and past president of the OAH, author of *Prayers for Ladies: The Suffragists and Women's Rights*

**Rev. Louisa Limer**  
Tennessee Historical Foundation and recipient of a 2017 Governor's Public Places of Distinction award

**Margaret Bankl, moderator**  
Vice Chair, Tennessee State University; President, Tennessee Chapter of the National Association of Public Administrators

**Read the U.S. Constitution ALOUD**  
Tuesday, September 17  
8:00-11:00 AM at Science Bldg. | 10:00-11:00 AM at Gregg Bldg. | 10:00-11:00 AM at Commons Bldg. | 11:00-12:00 PM at Bldg. of Arts | 11:00-12:00 PM at Honors

**Alburt Gore Sr.: Voting Rights, Civil Rights, and Public Policy**  
Monday, September 16 | 5:00 PM Tucker Theatre  
Dr. Andrew Spear, author of *Alburt Gore Sr.: A Political Life*

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY**  
VOTER REGISTRATION AT EVERY LOCATION

**SUFFRAGE FOR ALL**  
**Constitution Day**  
THURSDAY, SEPT. 17, 2020  
Real talk on Voting Privilege, Prejudice, and Power  
3 P.M. | MTSU.EDU/LIVE

**"Voting Access, Equity, Justice: Beyond Celebration"**

**Dr. Aleia Brown**  
State of Maryland College Park

**Dr. Laura Free**  
Harriet & Wm. Smith College

**Dr. Tiffany Moman**  
State of the South

**Dr. Minna Ulfman**  
Austin Peay State Univ.

**READ THE CONSTITUTION ALOUD: SEPT. 17**  
10-11:15 a.m. West Campus, on the steps of Hall of Fame Bldg.  
12-1:15 p.m. East Campus, on the lawn of Honors College

**VOTER REGISTRATION: SEPT. 14-17**  
9 a.m.-3 p.m. South Campus, on the circle in front of Walker Library

**Racial Justice Protests & The First Amendment**  
Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2:30 p.m. Visual Through Zone

**Monday, September 19**  
Middle Tennessee State University Celebrates  
**Constitution Day 2022**

**Grassroots Organizing and Movement Building are in Tennessee's DNA: Highlander Center Comes to MTSU**  
A featured speaker speaking on justice, equality, and sustainability action

**Rev. Allyn Maxfield-Steele**  
3 p.m. Tucker Theatre

**Constitution Week**  
Volunteer to Read the Constitution ALOUD, Bring Your Students, Offer Extra Credit!

**Tuesday, September 13**  
10:00-11:00 a.m. College of Behavioral and Health Sciences  
11:00-12:00 p.m. College of Business Administration

**Wednesday, September 14**  
10:00-11:00 a.m. College of Media and Entertainment  
11:00-12:00 p.m. College of Education  
12:00-1:00 p.m. College of Health Sciences

**Thursday, September 15**  
10:00-11:00 a.m. College of Arts and Applied Sciences  
11:00-12:00 p.m. College of Education  
12:00-1:00 p.m. College of Health Sciences

**Voter Registration**  
September 20, 2022  
9 a.m.-5 p.m. Bring Out!

**National Voter Registration Day**  
September 20, 2022  
9 a.m.-5 p.m. Bring Out!

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Highlander

**We the People**  
**MTSU CONSTITUTION WEEK**  
SEPT 13-17, 2021  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2021**

**HELY WOODRICK**  
Tennessee State University

**SHARON WOODRICK**  
Tennessee State University

**JUSTIN WOODRICK**  
Tennessee State University

**STATE LEGISLATURES SHAPING THE NATION: Tennessee Law and National Civil Culture**  
3 P.M. | TUCKER THEATRE | MTSU.EDU/LIVE

**OUTSIDE READINGS OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION**  
Come, Participate, Engage, Share, Commit, Read ALOUD!

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**  
9:00-11:00 a.m. College of Business and Applied Sciences  
11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. College of Education  
1:00-2:00 p.m. College of Health Sciences

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2021**  
9:00-11:00 a.m. College of Behavioral and Health Sciences  
11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. College of Education  
1:00-2:00 p.m. College of Health Sciences

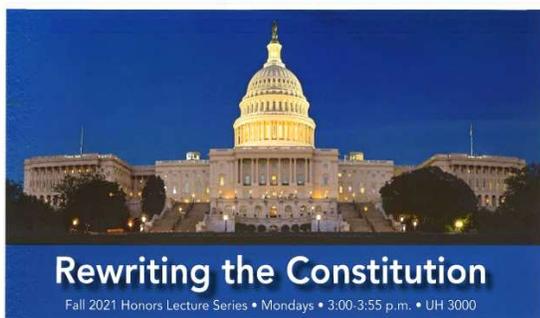
**PLUS**  
**FEDERALISTS, FEMINISTS, AND FOUNDERS: Ben's 25th Edition at MTSU**  
Friday, September 17, 2021 | 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Tucker Theatre

2022's Constitution Week theme was "Grassroots Organizing and Movement Building are in Tennessee's DNA: Highlander Center Comes to MTSU," and our speaker was Rev. Allyn Maxfield-Steele, co-director of the historic Highlander Research and Education Center, who talked about the ongoing work of labor, civil rights, and social justice organizing in Tennessee.

# Honors College Lecture Series

**Fall Honors Lecture Series.** Among many wonderful educational opportunities offered through programs across campus, the Honors College hosts an annual fall

lecture series that is civic in topic in the fall and is part of our university's voter education programming. The Honors College Lecture Series is an upper-division class and public lecture opportunity with a new topic each spring and fall. Both MTSU faculty and off-campus experts join the discussion and share their knowledge at the weekly discussions.



**August 23**  
Welcome and Introduction  
Philip E. Phillips (Honors) and  
Mary A. Evins (History)

**August 30**  
Youth Voting: Commemorating  
50 Years  
Amy Sayward (History)

**September 13**  
State Legislatures Shaping the  
Nation: Tennessee Law and  
National Civic Culture  
Hedy Weinberg (Executive Director,  
American Civil Liberties Union of  
Tennessee) and Shanna Hughley  
(President, Think Tennessee)  
*\*This lecture will take place in  
Tucker Theatre at 3:00 p.m. and is a  
Constitution Week event.*

**September 20**  
Immigration, Law, and Local  
Consequences  
Abdou Kaithi (Refugee Assistance,  
Murfreesboro Muslim Youth), Kellye  
Branson (Refugee-Immigrant Services,  
Catholic Charities), and Barbara  
Ibarra (League of Women Voters,  
Murfreesboro-Rutherford County)  
*\*This lecture will be held in  
STU 201 at 3:00 p.m. and is an MT  
Engage event.*

**September 27**  
The U.S. Constitutional  
Amending Process  
John R. Vile (Honors)

**October 4**  
Eliminating the Electoral  
College  
Michael Federici (Political Science and  
International Relations)

**October 18**  
The Constitutional Right to  
Vote  
Aaron Treadwell (History)

**October 25**  
Required National Public  
Service  
Keith Huber (Lt. General U.S. Army,  
Ret., Senior Advisor for Veterans and  
Leadership Initiatives)

**November 1**  
D.C. Statehood, Very Soon  
Yilin Zhang (League of Women Voters,  
Washington, D.C.)

**November 8**  
Self-Determination for  
Puerto Rico: Statehood or  
Nationhood?

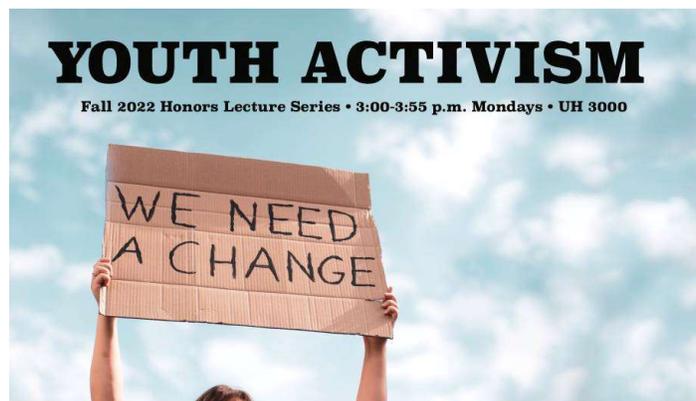
George Laws Garcia (Executive  
Director, Puerto Rico Statehood  
Council) and Barbara Ibarra (National  
Conference of Puerto Rican Women,  
Ret.)

**November 15**  
Applying for National  
Fellowships and Scholarships  
Laura Clippard (Honors)

**November 22**  
ePortfolio: An Aid to Personal  
Reflection and Social Action  
Percy Verret (MT Engage)

**November 29**  
Student Thesis Presentations

I AM **trueBLUE**  
MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY



**August 22**  
Welcome and Introduction  
Mary A. Evins (History)

**August 29**  
Polio Pioneers  
Katie Foss (Journalism and  
Strategic Media)

**September 5**  
Labor Day

**September 12**  
Black Student and  
Youth Activism: Black  
Youth Activism and the  
Reconstruction of America  
Sekou Franklin (Political Science  
and International Affairs)  
**Ice Cream Social following**

**September 19**  
Grassroots Organizing  
is in Tennessee's DNA:  
Highlander Comes to  
MTSU!  
**\*3:00 Tucker Theatre**

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**September 26**  
Youth Activism in  
Murfreesboro, Engaging  
with Our Community On  
and Off Campus: What's  
Your Issue?

A panel discussion with  
Murfreesboro Muslim Youth and  
Mr. Abdou Kaithi.

**MT Engage Reception  
following**

**October 3**  
Youth Activism Globally  
in Real Time: MTSU  
Dialogues with University  
Students Around the  
World  
Nobel Peace Center Ignitor  
Program, Oslo, Norway

**October 10**  
Fall Break

**October 17**  
Coming Out for Activism:  
LGBTQ Rights in  
Tennessee and How We  
Move Forward  
Brendon Holloway (Social Work,  
University of Denver)

**October 24**  
Civic Engagement in  
Emerging Adulthood:  
Effects on Well-Being  
Megan Zeringue (Psychology)

**October 31**  
National Fellowships and  
Scholarships  
Laura Clippard (Honors)

**November 7**  
Whatever You Aren't  
Changing, You're  
Choosing: Student  
Activism at MTSU  
Donna Baker (Albert Gore  
Research Center)

**November 14**  
Sustainability, the  
Environment, and MTSU  
Student Actions  
Jeremy Aber (Geosciences)

**November 21**  
Student Thesis  
Presentations

**November 28**  
Student Thesis  
Presentations

In the fall semester every year, the topic tries be in citizenship, to support our voting programs. Previous lecture series topics have included "Civic Virtue, The Common Good," "Governors: Principles, Programs, Politics, and Policies that Govern," "Suffrage," and "American Values," to name a few. The topic for Fall 2022 was "Youth Activism."

## Voter Turnout



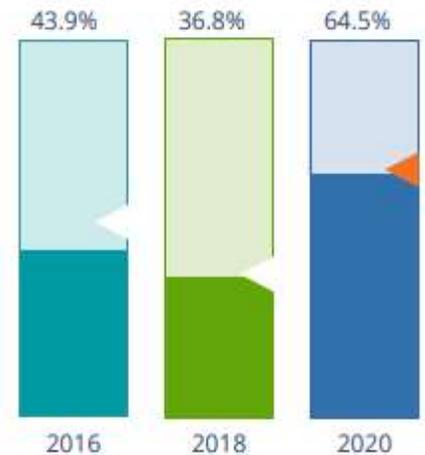
MTSU students at the polls on the first day of Early Voting in Tennessee 10/19/22.

We are a Campus Vote Project Voter Friendly Campus, and as such, we lay out specific objectives to move our campus positively forward in increasing MTSU student voter participation.

MTSU received the Silver Seal from the All-In Democracy Challenge in 2018 for having a 2018 campus voting rate between 30-39% in the 2018 midterm elections. In 2020, MTSU's campus voting rate jumped from 36.8% to 64.5%, for which we received the Silver Seal again.

We're really clear: Helping students register to vote where they live during college, so that they can readily get to the polls in person – the “live here, vote here” principle – increases student voting. We work hard to get students registered in the county where they can best vote in person during Early Voting or on Election Day.

### VOTING RATE



The **Voting Rate** is the percentage of eligible students who voted on Election Day. The voting rate is also the product of the registration and yield rates.

Data provided by NSLVE

**Vote Early Day** for MTSU was the first day of Early Voting in Tennessee, October 19, 2022. Students went individually to the polls on the first day of Early Voting. Whole classes went. University programs such as the MTSU Experiential Learning Program provided funds to take classes out to breakfast or lunch after voting. The national Vote Early Day program sent pizza to our polling place party.



MTSU students at the polls on the first day of Early Voting in Tennessee 10/19/22.

**Email and text reminders** were sent to students, to be sure they were aware that in Tennessee, there are two Saturdays of Early Voting. We urge students to take advantage of those two weekends if they need to drive home.

**Hop on the Bus.** MTSU’s Transportation Services department rerouted the campus Green Line on Election Day 11/8/22 to take our students from the James Union Building on campus to the nearby polls at Central Magnet School, and back. We had posters all over campus with the bus route and information.

**Walks to the polls** from Student Union. Our campus orgs have organized them every year.

**HOP ON THE MTSU GREEN LINE TO VOTE ON ELECTION DAY!**

**Tuesday, November 8**  
9:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.

From 6:30 p.m. until the voting lines end, MTSU Special Shuttle Route will run from JUB to Central Magnet and back.

**VOTE HERE**

**Vote at Central Magnet School on E. Main Street**

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY. I AM true BLUE

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

**VOTE**

*We're having a*  
**PARTY AT THE POLLS**

**CENTRAL MAGNET SCHOOL**  
701 E. MAIN ST.  
**TUESDAY NOV. 8**  
3:00-7:00

Food trucks, popcorn, hot cider, and more!  
Take the **GREEN** bus route to Central Magnet from campus, or use **LYFT Code VOTE22** for a discounted ride to the polls!

ADP Middle Tennessee State University

STUDENTS LEARN STUDENTS VOTE CIVIC INFLUENCERS

CAMPUS VOTE PROJECT

TENNESSEE CAMPUS

**CIVIC NATION**

**Party at the Polls** happened again this fall! MTSU hosted a party at the polling site closest to campus, Central Magnet School. Food, music, games, and energy were meant to make good fun and get out the student vote! We hung door hangers on doorknobs of student apartments all through town to make the party at the polls a welcoming neighbor event! A Lyft code for a discounted ride to the polls was also included.

## Ballot Access

MTSU is a university that does not have a polling place on our campus. An effort we strongly advocated and worked for, Tennessee House Bill 1674, was defeated in subcommittee on March 11, 2020, in the Tennessee General Assembly.



Since then, despite blockage at the state level, MTSU's chapter of American Democracy Project and our 2022 Civic Fellows worked hard in 2022, and will continue in 2023, to engage with the Rutherford County Election Commission to provide a polling location on the MTSU campus in future, hopefully for the 2024 election cycle.

Until that time comes, we're busing to the polls, walking to the polls, driving to the polls, ridesharing to the polls, taking our friends to the polls, and Lyft'ing to the polls.

# Our Coalition and Leadership

## Key Local and Tennessee Community Partners and Friends

- Civic Engagement Office, Office of the Tennessee Secretary of State
- Rutherford County Election Commission
- League of Women Voters of Murfreesboro/Rutherford County
- American Association of University Women
- Tennessee Campus Democracy Network
- Civic Tennessee

Other resources include both the local and state Democratic and Republican parties, which contribute to our campus voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts at MTSU. There are active College Democrats and College Republicans at MTSU, with their chapters fully registered with Student Affairs.



TENNESSEE CAMPUS

— DEMOCRACY NETWORK —



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
of Murfreesboro/Rutherford County

## Key Campus Partners

The organizational and departmental team members from across campus who proactively work to advance engagement and student voter participation and to increase our students' understanding of and commitment to the American democratic process include:

Student Government Association  
MTSU Center for Student Involvement and Leadership  
American Democracy Project MTSU  
Albert Gore Research Center  
Center for Educational Media  
Free Speech Center  
MTSU Poll  
Seigenthaler Chair of Excellence in First Amendment Studies  
MTSU Information Technology Division  
MTSU Marketing and Communications  
MTSU University Honors College  
MTSU College of Liberal Arts  
MTSU University College  
MTSU Office of the University Provost  
MT Engage Program  
MTSU Experiential Learning Program  
Office of Intercultural and Diversity Affairs  
Center for Fairness, Justice, and Equity  
Office of Community Engagement and Inclusion  
Center for Women and Nontraditional Students  
Political Economy Research Institute  
University Housing

## Key University Administration, Faculty, and Staff Allies

Dr. Mark Byrnes, University Provost

Dr. Mary Hoffschwelle, Associate Provost for Special Initiatives

Vice President Andrew Oppmann, MTSU Marketing and Communications

Dr. Dan Kelley, Asst. Vice President, Student Affairs

Dr. Ken Blake, Director, MTSU Poll

Prof. Ken Paulson, Director, MTSU Free Speech Center

Prof. Deborah Fisher, Director, Seigenthaler Chair in First Amendment Studies

Prof. Lara Daniel, Jones College of Business, and ADP MTSU Board

Dr. Louis Kyriakoudes, Director, Albert Gore Research Center

Dr. Laura Clark, Director, Center for Educational Media, and ADP MTSU Board

Dr. John Vile, Dean, University Honors College

Dr. Philip Phillips, Associate Dean, University Honors College

Ms. Tatum Hochstetler, Coordinator, University Honors College

Dr. Leah Lyons, Dean, College of Liberal Arts

Mr. Matthew Hibdon, Strategic Communications Manager, College of Liberal Arts

Dr. Monica Smith, Asst. to the President for Community Engagement and Inclusion

Prof. Carol Swayze, Director, Experiential Learning

Mr. Robert Carey, Student Government Association Election Commissioner

Prof. Carol Swayze, Director, Experiential Learning

Ms. Jada Powell, President, MTSU Student Government Assn. 2022-23

Mr. Robert Carey, Election Commissioner, MTSU SGA 2022-23

Ms. Kayla Jenkins, American Democracy Project for Civic Learning

Dr. Mary Evins, American Democracy Project for Civic Learning

## Key Students

We will not name all our fabulous MTSU students, but we surely appreciate every single one of them! Our student leadership is The Very Best. Our students come from across every department and organization on campus. This fall we have two Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellows and a Civic Influencer (formerly Campus Election Engagement Project) Fellow. (Through the university's new Assistant to the President for Community Engagement and Inclusion, we are working to get Andrew Goodman Fellows also on our campus.) Our students make ADP viable, and they carry the load with love and dedication and with unflagging energy for the work. They have been *rocks* all fall through seven weeks of voter registration!



## ADP Leadership



Dr. Mary Evins

Program Coordinator and  
Student Org Faculty  
Advisor



Stevie Naumcheff

ADP Student Org  
President 2022-2023



Kayla Jenkins

ADP Graduate Research  
Assistant

Point of contact for designation process:

Dr. Mary Evins

Director, MTSU American Democracy Project for Civic Learning  
Research Professor of History, University Honors College  
MTSU P.O. Box 267, 1301 East Main Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37132

[mary.evins@mtsu.edu](mailto:mary.evins@mtsu.edu) [amerdem@mtsu.edu](mailto:amerdem@mtsu.edu)

Office: (615) 904-8241

# Evaluation and Reporting

Assessing, evaluating, and reporting MTSU's fulfillment of our objectives is fundamental to what we do. In 2023 we will review and write reflectively on the qualitative aspects of our 2022 programs and will submit our 2022 report to the All-In Democracy Challenge and other organizations interested in our work. And we will most assuredly evaluate this engagement in light of its impacts and effectiveness on the overall civic learning/civic engagement and campus climate objectives of our university.

Additionally, we will await with expectation our NSLVE report in 2023, to be able to look more concretely into this university's student voting. We are always happy to openly share our NSLVE data, which [we post publicly on our ADP MTSU website](#) and which we will forward to All-In when the report becomes available to us.

# MIDDLE TENNESSEE

STATE UNIVERSITY



**#MTSUVotes**

**#TrueBlueVoter**