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10-1-20 Stetson University

President's Weekly Update: Student Political Engagement and the 2020 Election.

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>> Good afternoon everyone. I want to welcome you to the President's Weekly Webinar. Generally hosted by President Christopher Roellke. I am not Doctor Roellke, I'm Noel Painter, Provost and Executive Vice President at Stetson. And on behalf of President Roellke and myself, I want to welcome you to this webinar and as always, I appreciate your attention to the things that matter at Stetson.

And certainly today's panel on Student Political Engagement in the 2020 Election is an essential item for every institution and higher education to be playing close attention to and at Stetson we have a special connection in many ways that we will be exploring today.

I'll offer just a brief update on a few things that are also important in essential work at Stetson. As we know within the

last week, Governor Rhonda Santis has done a considerable expansion of the availability of businesses, particularly bars and restaurants throughout Florida. And around the same time, Stetson has found itself in a good position to be able to move from tier 1 to tier 2 in its reaction to COVID-19.

In no way does this recognize a loosening of our expectations of our community to adhere to the standards that have gotten us to this point; rather it is because our community has paid attention to the guidelines that we put in place that we have been able to elevate ourselves to tier 2. So a grand thank you to students, staff, faculty and those who come to our campuses or allowing us to get to this point and continued urging to pay attention to those things that will keep us safe.

One other thing I'll mention is that certainly in our world, in our country, and on our campuses now, there is great attention that we should be paying toward racial equity and inclusion. And this last week has seen continued emphasis on that area.

I want to assure you that on our campuses we are continuing to elevate the work around campus climate to continue to have our series on race in the 21st century. We will be hold be virtual meetings on race and equity as promised in an email from President Roellke last week on Friday. And various departments and schools, library, colleges, continue to make strong statements about racial justice and their commitment to racial justice at Stetson.

So, I'm pleased with that work. I'm pleased that we continue to focus and elevate that work even with so many things going on around us. It is essential to the future of Stetson and our progress moving forward.

With that said I want to invite all of our panelists to turn on their cameras for today's discussion on political engagement in the 2020 Election. I'll introduce the moderator of the panel, Kevin Winchell. Kevin is the Associate Director of Community Engagement at Stetson, a student and now staff member who works in the university's Bonner Program and AmeriCorps VISTA Program. Additionally, he's a recognized leader in student political and student engagement throughout Florida and has been recognized with that throughout the Florida campus community impact Community Engagement Educator of the Year Award recently.

Kevin, thanks for leading this work and I'm pleased to turn it over to you at this time.

>> Thanks a lot, Noel. I appreciate it.

So, I want to quickly introduce all of our panelists who are here with us today. First if you can wave when I say your name.

Let's see. Professor Ciara Torres-Spelliscy. Hi Ciara.

Professor Torres-Spelliscy is joining us from the College of Law where she's a Professor of Law. She's also a Fellow with the Benton Justice.

She campaign finance law. And today she's going to be talking

with us a bit of how to vote and what we need to know about voting during a pandemic. That's a really important topic right now, and we want to make sure our entire Stetson community is aware of everything we need to know about voting in a pandemic, whether it's voting in mail or in person and everything else.

Thank you for joining us Professor Torres-Spelliscy.

Next we're joined by Jim Daughton. Jim is an alumnus of Stetson University. Graduated with a degree of Political Science back in 1989. Jim is the President of Metz Husband and Daughton, PA, up in Tallahassee. He's the former Deputy Chief of Staff for the Executive Office of the Governor serving for multiple (indiscernible) both Republican and Democrat.

We're really thankful to have Jim here as alumnus to talk about some of his experiences being a Political Science student back in the 1980s and what sorts of things he learned from his education here at Stetson and the experiences he had here during that time. So that we can have a sense of how Stetson is not just, is not just focused on the election that's coming up right now but has a track record and history of political engagement that spans multiple generations at our institution.

And we're also joined by a current student, Amelia Maulfair.

Amelia is a, going to be a graduate of the class of 2022.

Amelia is studying Political Science and Philosophy. She's the Director of Stetson Votes, which is our student political engagement team that does voter registration, voter education,

and voter turnout for the election. And we're really excited to have Amelia on board.

Amelia has been a dynamic student leader who has been really focusing on increasing maximizing our student voters and registration and turnout for the election. We know that voting in the students very first election is really important for developing a lifelong habit of civil engage. Amelia thank you for joining us today as well.

So, I'm Kevin Winchell. I am really excited to be here moderating this panel discussion. I'm going to go ahead and jump into some of our presentation now.

Thanks for Julie and Megan behind the scenes who are helping to run the webinar. If you get in the chance in the chat, send them some love.

First message I want to put up for everybody is we want you to get political. Getting political is essential to the mission of Stetson University and to higher education in general.

Colleges and universities weren't founded in order to just help people make a little bit more money than if they'd only gone to high school. The founding purpose of higher education was to create and implicate the habits of citizenship that are necessary for building the citizens that are going to help us address the most challenging problems that face our world.

We know all too often especially now that if people want to see something changed, it's fine to post something online or go to a

protest and those sorts of things. But if you really want to see change you have to get political and focus on changing policies. Because policies are what create a lot of structures for how our society is run and the level of justice that exists in our society.

So, we encourage all of our students to get political. But I want to make a distinction here between being political and being partisan. Let's go back.

So, being political is good. Being political is part of our founding mission as an institution of higher education. Being political is how we take our values, whatever those values are. Whether you're liberal or conservative or Libertarian or socialist or whatever else, we want to make sure that you are able to identify your values and interrogate them deeply and critically to make sure that you're questioning those values and that you're coming out of that interrogation process with better clarity about what you believe and making sure that you really done your due diligence in ensuring your beliefs have been thoroughly vetted.

Being political means that you're able to engage in our political processes to make the change so that our government aligns with our values. But being partisan is different than that. Being partisan means you're focusing on one political party, for example, that you are trying to achieve policy ends for a party. And while you know we don't discourage that from

Stetson, that's not part of our mission. It's to get our students to align with one political party or another. But our mission is to make sure that we're creating the citizens who are equipped with the civic knowledge and skill toolkits in order to interrogate their values and know how to grab the levers of power in our society and pull them in order to make the change they wish to see in our community.

So, our emphasis is on politics but not necessarily partisanship. I want to make that clear, because often those terms are used interchangeably and they're not the same thing. It's especially important at a nonpartisan university like Stetson University.

But we can't get political and can't make political change unless we're doing at least the bare minimum in our democracy which is making sure people are voting in our democracy. So something that's interesting, really important for us to know at Stetson is people who vote in their very first election are 30% more likely to become habitual lifelong voters. What that means for us at Stetson and at every institution of higher education across the country, especially those traditional two year and four year programs that have a lot of students between 18 and 24 years old.

What that means is that oftentimes the first time our young people are able to vote, they are doing so from the friendly confines of a college or university. And what means for us is

that we have a responsibility to our government and to our society and our democracy to make sure we are making sure the students are voting in that very first election, because we know that if they vote in that first election, they're 30% more likely to become a habitual lifelong voter. It's important we follow through on that part of our mission.

And Amelia, in a little bit will talk about a lot of the work that we're doing right now to ensure that students are turning out for the 2020 Election.

Something else that we know too is students who register to vote using their campus address are 23.7% more likely to vote in elections as well. So, we do encourage students to register using their campus address which is especially important because you know Florida is a swing state. And you know students votes mean a lot more here in Florida than they do in a place like California where it's overwhelmingly Democratic or in a place like Wyoming why it's overwhelmingly Republican. So we want to make sure students are voting in a place where they're spending most of their time during a normal year at least. COVID is kind of an exception to that.

But we also recognize that this decreases the barriers for students to vote if they're registering to vote using their campus address. Because when the August and November elections are here, our students are located in Florida during that time. And it's a lot harder to get them to go vote if they didn't get a



mail ballot. It's harder for them to go vote down in Miami or across state lines or somewhere else and drive over there on election day than it is to just be registered here where they are at Stetson and go to their local pres sings which is just a few blocks away. So our goal is to take out the barrier for these students and this is the best way we can do that.

The last point I want to make here before going to allow our panelist to speak is we really want to focus on getting students to identify how they can make change through politics and that means first that they understand that not all the political stuff they view is actually effective. And so there is a great political scientist who has a book out, Eitan Hersh. She's up at Tufts University and his book is called Politics for Power. In that Doctor Hersh talks about we need politics by the way of inquiring political power and using that.

So, there are some things we do that don't allow us to get more power. You know, and one example of that is social media.

Social media can have some influence long the margins if you're contacting people who you have a close relationship with and if you're really trying to persuade them or get them to turn out and vote. But for the most part a lot of the activity that happens on social media on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, wherever else is just shooting out your values and some language into a void and it creates a lot of echo chamber effects because our, the social media platforms have an incentive to give you

things that resonate with what you're already believing rather than give you contrary information.

And so, posting online isn't necessarily going to change anyone's perspective on things. Very rarely it does. What's more effective, Doctor Hersh argues is to have direct face-to-face contact with people, conversations with people, is to focus on traditional political organize being mechanism. Like calling voters and now texting voters. Having face-to-face conversations, having civic meetings in clubs and organizations. Those sort of classical elements of a civic society and the infrastructure for a civic society. That's what we need to focus on. So this quote from a student at Cornell says talking about politics isn't doing politics. There is no community or con at this time went organizing, no out reach or attempt at change or action within or outside the university.

So we want to get beyond talking. We want to get to action. We want to have students under how they can grab those levers of power in order to get more votes.

And when they're trying the get these levers of power, they can either talk with people who are decision makers who are elected officials. So that might look like lobbying, protests, different meetings with their elected officials to try to talk to them or persuade them to support an issue in the community. Or if they find that their elected officials aren't voting the way that aligns with their values, they need to try to elect

different officials by going to voters and doing canvassing, calling, texting to increase votes for candidates instead of the candidates that disagree with them.

Activism means building power to influence policy outcomes. So that's important for our students to understand. I want to lead this webinar with that information so you have a good understanding of how we're approaching politics at Stetson University.

The last thing I'll mention here is we have a website we're constantly updating with new information and resources, it's one stop shop for all of our students who want to get registered to vote, change their address, enroll in vote by mail, get information about candidates and issues, and be able to find volunteer opportunities for campaigns. So if you go to [Stetson.edu/vote](http://Stetson.edu/vote). Especially if you're not someone who is not registered to vote right now or you haven't signed up to get a ballot to vote by mail and your state allows that, please go to [Stetson.edu/vote](http://Stetson.edu/vote) right now. I won't be offended if you pull up a different screen. If anything I'll consider it mission accomplished on our end. Pull that up and fill out the information through turbo vote, our partner a nonpartisan information. So vote register to vote. Because we want you to be part of that 30% people who become 30% of those habit full voters after voting in the first election.

So I want to turn it over now to Professor Ciara

Torres-Spelliscy for some more information about voting during a pandemic. Go ahead.

>> Okay. Just waiting for my slides to load. There we go. See if I have control. I do not. Let's see. Ah. Okay.

So, I'm going to talk about voting during a pandemic, but because I'm a campaign finance expert I'm going to start with the money in politics context for the 2020 Election.

So, this is set to be the most expensive election in history. 1.5 billion for Congress. And this is either really lagging or I don't have control of the PowerPoint.

And a half billion for the Senate. Next slide.

And we also had the most outside spending of any election cycle in history at one billion dollars so far.

And that's on top of federal party committees spending which is also over a billion dollars.

And all of that money is trying to influence your vote.

Now if you're interested in learning more about money and politics, I have a whole book about it called political brands.

If you like to stream your information, there is a new Netflix special called, can you buy an election? Which came out this week which I'm in. And you can check that out as well.

So, let me compare voting to getting groceries. So prepandemic, if I wanted to make dinner, I would zip over to Publix, pick up some food and you know, be on my merry way. But now, I plan my shopping two weeks in advance. When it arrives at my door I

have protective gloves and masks. And I take the extra step of disinfecting my food before it goes into my house.

And I think you may want to take some similar precautions when voting during a pandemic. And so I think you're going to have to make a plan to be a voter in a way that you wouldn't have to in a normal election, where you could be a little bit more casual about it.

So, step one of course is to register. And the registration date is fast approaching. You have until October 5th to register. And if you don't register to vote, then you cannot vote in the 2020 Election.

I would also encourage you to double check that you're still registered, if you registered a couple of years ago. And do it before October 5th, so that if there is a problem, you have time to fix it.

And then of course the second thing you have to do is vote. You can vote by mail. You can vote in person.

Because of COVID-19 if you're immunocompromised I would strongly encourage you to vote by mail.

You can request a ballot online from your County's supervisors of elections but you have to do that by October 24th. And you also have to get it back to the state of Florida by 7 p.m. on election night.

Now, if you're voting by mail you're going to have to have some patience. It may take extra time for the ballot to get from the

state of Florida to you and it may take time for your ballot once you filled it out and put it back in the mail to get back to your supervisor of elections. So, please build in that time so that your vote actually counts.

Early voting is another great option. This is a screenshot of my supervisor of elections here in Pinellas. And as you can tell, early voting is October 19th to November 1st. 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. every single day. And in the places where we have most of our campuses, so Pinellas which is Gulfport, Hillsboro, which is Tampa and Volusia, which is Deland. They also have the same voting hours. But if you live in a smaller County in Florida, they typically have shorter hours or shorter numbers of days where you can early vote. So just double check.

Now, another good option is if you have a vote by mail ballot and you filled it out and it's getting really close to the election and you're worried that if you put it in the post office or, you know, send it through the mail it won't get there in time, then be proactive. Take it personally to one of the official drop boxes in your county. You can walk there. You can bike there. You can drive there.

So, my suggestions is if you can, your young, you're healthy, vote early in person. If that doesn't work for you, dropping off your filled in absentee ballot with the signature on the outside of the envelope and put it into a designated DropBox, that's basically your second best option.

You can also deliver your absentee ballot through the mail. You just have to give enough time to get back to your Board of Elections so that they can count it. And then if all else fails, if you asked for an absentee ballot and for whatever reason it did not show up in your mailbox, then vote in person on election day.

And that is the traditional way of voting, voting in person on election day. But because we're in a pandemic, I would encourage you to be just thoughtful about it. Wear a mask for your protection and for the protection of your fellow voters and the protection of the poll workers.

If you have them, wear some gloves, use some hand sanitizers. And because you're probably going to be in a line for awhile, bring something to entertain you. You know, music, a good book, homework, bring a chair, like a stadium chair. Pretend like you're waiting for concert tickets. Bring water and a snack or if you really see a long line, you might want to bring a meal. And if you vote on election day, I would just expect a wait. This is actually a picture from Virginia. This is their early voting line so they are already taking it very seriously up there.

And I also have to emphasize, only vote once. Normally I wouldn't have to say this, but there have been politicians who have recently encouraged people to vote twice. Do not do this. It is a felony in Florida to vote twice. It is a federal crime

to vote twice in a federal election.

And another thing I would warn you about is there is an he more news amount of misinformation about voting itself. Beware of places like this, the [protectmyvote.com](https://protectmyvote.com) which has a very Orwellian name. So LeBron James did not give permission for this image to be used. And the real LeBron James was quite annoyed at this disinformation campaign that was using his image. And part of why I think he was so upset is that he's actually working on expanding voting and voting opportunities in 2020. And so it sort of extra obnoxious for a voter suppression group to try to use his image to discourage people from voting. And then when we get to election night we're all going to have to be patient. Because more Americans are voting by mail, we may not know who won Florida. We may not know who won the presidency. But that doesn't mean there is fraud or a problem. It just means it takes extra time to count all those vote by mail votes.

So my current mood as an election lawyer is a little grim. I am waiting for lots of different shoes to fall. But I am a reformer at heart so I will leave you with these two thoughts. One, is to keep calm and go vote. Your democracy needs you. And a special plug for student voting. Students in Florida could decide this election. You have enormous power in your hands. Use it.

Thanks very much.



>> Thank you so much for sharing that Professor Torres-Spelliscy. And to emphasize one point you were making too it's something I hear often, as you get to the last month of the election, people often are so tired of getting all the text and getting all the phone calls and the mail in their post office, through the USPS and everything.

One pro tip I can give everybody, if you don't want to get any of that anymore and if you feel strongly about a particular candidate and you want to save them some money or resources, go ahead and vote now. Because the sooner you vote, the sooner the voter file that the supervisor of election's office maintains, will indicate that you checked off and you voted in the election. That will get all those campaigns, they're actually good campaigns to look at the voter file, it will get them to stop messaging you and reach out to you. And if you want those campaigns to save money, it will allow them to put all those resources, the money and the time from their volunteers into other voters who may need a little more encouragement and support and information and hand holding than you do.

So, if you want to save money, save time and save your sanity for the last month of the election, vote now because the sooner you do that, the sooner you'll be off the hook.

>> Amen.

>> Yeah.

All right. So thanks so much for sharing that information.

That's going to be really helpful for some many of our students and other folks who have been hearing a lot of information about the election and what's going on right now.

Now we're going to shift over to hear from one of our current students who is leading our efforts object the did he lane campus to make sure students are all registered to vote, enrolled to vote by mail and turning out and voting in the up coming election and that they're informed about the issues an candidates and everything else. I want to turn it over to Amelia Maulfair who will share that information as the Director of Stetson Votes.

Amelia.

>> Thank you Kevin.

So, as mentioned, I'm Amelia, I'm the Director of Stetson Votes. So Stetson University's political engagement, political out reach almost entirely manifests itself through Stetson Votes. So Stetson Votes is a nonpartisan political organization. We handle voter out reach, voter engagement, voter turnout and voter activism.

A lot of our methodology is based in quantitative analysis. It's all data driven. Kevin mentioned just a minute ago that good campaigns are using the supervisor of election database. And that's essentially what we're doing as well. We are using a database of the entire student body to determine who we're going to reach out to and how we're going to reach out to them.

As well, most of our decision making is based in theory. I'm a Political Science major. Kevin studied Political Science and Philosophy. Many of our team members also study Political Science.

And getting to our team, we have a very diverse group, various backgrounds and majors and political ideologies. And that allows us to really have a wide scope when it comes to our outreach.

We found that due to this wide scope, we're really able to engage students in a way that Stetson hasn't been able to in awhile, because we found that students are much more responsive to other students than faculty or staff or administration.

And then our team also includes more than just students. We have partnerships with both internal and external organizations. Internal, we are partnered with BSA, Hillel, and various other organizations on campus. And outside of campus, we're partnered with league of women voters, which is a nonpartisan political organization that's nationwide. As they are around for over a hundred years now. And we're also partnered with bridge USA which is a five person organization that works to establish communication between both parties and recreate that dialogue that seems to have gone missing recently.

And we're also partnered with campus election engagement project, which works to create a more inclusive environment for politics as well as overcoming all barriers that exist, that

prohibit students from voting in elections.

Kevin looks like you had something to say?

>> Oh, you mentioned BSA and Hillel. BSA, for those who aren't familiar, that's our black student organization. Hillel is our Jewish organization. We also work with other, more partisan organizations, when the, when they are active. So we traditionally had relation with College Republicans, College Democrats, right now young Americans for Freedom and Young Americans for Liberty, when they're active as well.

There was an organization Turning Point USA with whom we worked before. We were active with them in the 2016 cycle and hosted some debates with them. A lot of student political organizations that are really active. And Stetson Votes job as the nonpartisan organizing group is to really make sure that all of those organizations are focused on voter registration, voter education and voter turnout in the election.

So, we share the database that Amelia mentioned. We share all the Republican students with the College Republicans when they're active so the College Republicans can focus on turning out their students for the election. We give the list of Democratic students to the College Democrats. So Stetson Votes covers the gaps. Anybody who isn't covered by College Republicans or College Democrats or other ideological and partisan leaning organizations we want to make sure we're covering all those and the ones who are NPA, independent as

well.

So, our goal is to make sure nobody gets left behind. That everybody is voting in that very first election which they're eligible. And we want to use all of our partners and resources to help make that happen.

>> Yeah. Absolutely. And to that end, engaging every single student, we're going at this with a much more differentiated approach, so we're not just calling people. And we're not just emailing them. We're engaging them through Instagram, through Facebook, through Snapchat, through whatever means we have available. Because we found this greater diversity of approach allows for a more, it's more responsive from the students. And we've also found that if we can enroll students and vote by mail, that has a 30% more likely chance for them to vote in elections. So if someone even rolls and votes by mail, they're 30% more likely to vote. So we're definitely encouraging every student to vote by mail as well as vote early or what have you.

>> Thank you Amelia. So, Amelia will stick around as well for some Q and A at the end of the presentation too in case there is lots of questions from you all about what other sorts of activities our students have going on. And we'll talk agents bit too later in some of the slides about some of up coming events many of which Stetson Votes are putting on. Amelia and her team. So thank you Amelia for sharing that information with us. You're doing a great job.

>> Thank you.

>> Yeah.

So, now I would like to turn it over to our alumnus who is on the panel today. Jim, he's joining us from Tallahassee today. And so Jim if you can, go ahead and tell us a bit about your experience when you were a Stetson student and some of the ways that your experiences have influenced you today in your political work that you do.

>> Sure. Well thank you very much Kevin for the opportunity. First I just want to congratulate you and the students for really civic activism on steroids. It's really as an alum, I'm really proud to see this level of engagement.

For the folks on the call today, I was asked to give a little bit of a historical perspective on Stetson's involvement through the years. The university didn't wake up a year or two ago and decide it wanted to have activity in politics or government. Then also just a couple minutes on how making the skills that you're developing now can translate into sort of work post your time at Stetson.

I'm going to make four brief points. One I am going to talk a little about Stetson's history and two why the work that you're doing now matters. And provide some thoughts on maybe some things you should be doing on campus now to prepare you for the future. And finally talk about how this work can translate into a career path.

So, I'll start with a little bit of Stetson history here. In Florida we have Senate president's. A Senate President is one of the three most powerful positions in the state of Florida. And Senate President changes every two years.

In the last ten years, three of Florida Senate president's are Stetson graduates. I mean just think about that for a moment. Stetson, with the size Stetson is. And that has to tell you a little bit about what the culture is about promoting civic engagement. It's just frankly amazing.

And if you walk around Washington, D. C. and look in some of those Florida offices and beyond. I promise you if you're in Tallahassee and you walk up and down Monroe Street around the capital, in this side the capital, well not inside now, but around the capital, you're going to find Stetson alum throughout these processes, serving in many, many capacities.

When I was at Stetson, I was sort of the Wayne Bailey, Ann Halem Merris prodigy. It sounds like there is a lot of great work done by Kevin and Doctor Truitt right now.

But one of the things that was very important to sort of combine what went on in the classroom and what goes on outside of the classroom. And my line as you must be present to win. So during the winter term, there is always an opportunity to travel to Washington, D. C. And sort of allow freshman and sophomores to stick their toe in the sand and see what working and learning in Washington, D. C. would be like.

When I was a sophomore, I took state and local government and Doctor Bailey took us on a field trip, I guess, if you will, to Tallahassee, where we were briefed by legislators and met with legislative staff. And just as a quick aside, I was Political Science major, but I always thought, gosh I'm the only one who is waking up and reading, this is a while ago, reading the state and local government section of the newspaper. Now of course it would be online. But I thought, well none of my pals are doing this. The accounting majors aren't doing this. And the theater majors warrant really doing this. I thought, this is, I'm just maybe a little different than these folks.

Until I went on that trip with Doctor Bailey to Tallahassee and I looked around and I met a bunch of different people and I realize, this is sort of where I belong. These are people just like I am. They care about politics. They care about the process. Fun for us is sitting around and having a coffee or if you're over 21 a beer and talking politics. And you do find that being around like minded people whether you agree on Philosophy or not, there is just a lot of folks, lot of folks that are interested in those same things. And those specific opportunities were huge to me.

Also Stetson has done a tremendous job of (indiscernible) sometimes for class credit, sometimes over the summer. I did a campaign internship. I did a legislative internship. There are plenty not for profits around. And of course, it all interest



in public administration. Go to work in the county commission office. Go to work for a city manager or county manager. There are tremendous opportunities. And I encourage you to take advantage of any internship opportunity you have.

And I would also say, they're not going to come looking for you. Take that initiative and reach out to a Professor, reach out to somebody in the administration and say, hey I could really use some help here. I promise, promise, that either the Stetson faculty, administration or the Stetson alum ny network can help find you something. May not always be pay, but they can find you, they can find you something.

I also want to mention a little bit about a lot of the work, specifically that you're doing in this election matters. I want to share a couple things. If you're walking precincts for candidate and you're the only one in this neighborhood an it's a hundred degrees outside and you're like what in the heck am I doing? Or if you're registering voters, you're like oh my God, this is the most boring thing I ever done. My back hurts. Does this make a difference?

I want to share something, a couple things with you. Since 1992, there have been over 51 million votes cast in Florida for President. 51 million votes. If you add all those up, there is less than 20,000 votes that determined who wins the state of Florida. Since 1992.

So, register to vote makes a difference. Getting somebody to

vote makes a difference. And I encourage you that when it's lonely out there, when you're stuffing an envelope or whatever you're doing, it makes a difference.

There have been seven statewide elections since 2010 that have been decided by less than 1.2% of the vote. Last year in the 2018 election cycle there were over ten legislative seats that were decided by less than a thousand votes. Think about that. So as I said you never know when you work too hard just when you haven't done enough. That's the way campaigns are. So I just want to praise you for the work you're doing and let you know that it does, it does matter.

Then because I'm an old guy and I like to give advice. I want to tell you a couple thing around Stetson that I would do if I were a sophomore or junior right now.

First of all, I'm a Political Science guy, I'm a Liberal Arts guy. I believe in the value of education, nothing against business majors. They're terrific too. But short answer essays; write them. Professors if you're on this call, make your students write short essay answers. A paragraph or two. That is the way the world communicates now.

And I'm not going to hire somebody who cannot communicate with a client in one paragraph or two paragraphs. Governors get briefed with a one-page briefing paper. Senators get briefed with a one-page briefing paper. If you can not communicate in something that is concrete, clear and concise, you're not going

to succeed in this process. So please, please, please, write, write, write. It still matters. It's not all texting all the time.

Also, I mean one of my clients is Microsoft, I'm going to show a little bit. But industry certifications, if you didn't get them in high school. If you can't do Excel you need to learn Excel. Businesses move quickly and how do you combine a good liberal arts major with a little business of business acumen and the ability to use Excel, the ability to know what you're doing in Word, PowerPoint are just critical now. The world has changed and I encourage you to keep up with it.

Also to seek out any opportunities whether it's taking a public speaking course at Stetson, but to be able to get up in front of a group and again in very short order be able to communicate effectively what your ideas are. That does not come naturally people. So get some practice. If it's not your thing, get a little bit of practice. You do not need to be the great communicator. You don't need to be Ronald Reagan or Barack Obama, but you do need to speak coherently in a meeting and it just shows, it shows a skill that I think is important.

One of the things that I was pleased to see with this level of civil engagement. Don't just join an organization on campus. Lead the organization. Learn to plan something. Organize something. Work on detail. Details matter. That doesn't matter what career path you choose. All those things you're

going do at Stetson are going to prepare you if you're involved in a fraternity, if you're involved in sorority, if you're involved in a campus organization. Take a leadership role and learned to get organized.

The last thing I want to talk about briefly is just how the activism that you're doing now may translate into a career. So, clearly you think I'm working on, I want people to vote and I care about politics. So clearly you could run for elected office. I mentioned that Stetson alum do pretty well in the electoral process. But also there is a whole role for professional staff in the process. That's something that many people do. They maybe work on a campaign, then they'll get involved in professional staff. You can be (indiscernible) to senator. You could be attorney for Senate regulated (indiscernible) or the Senate healthcare committee. You could be an analyst for any of those committees. There is a whole world out there of public service that is beyond just running for office. And you can have a major impact how government works.

Political consultants, you know, the kids that are getting, working on campaigns right now, they could be campaign managers. And I can assure you, based on the amount of money that we learned is in the process. Political consultants are doing pretty well and it's not a bad career choice for you the you really, really love politics. You won't starve.

And then lastly, a lot of times working on a campaign or working in an administration or working for someone later can lead to a career in government advocacy/lobbying whatever you like to call it. It could be for, I represent mostly business organizations for the legislature you are, but also physician groups. You know, you pick the organization in Tallahassee or in Washington, D. C. or any state capital. You want to work on education issues there is plenty much opportunity. You want to work in the healthcare space, there is plenty of opportunity.

So, government advocacy is something that is also pretty fruitful career especially if you enjoy government and politics. So with that, that's my, those are the points I wanted to make to you and Kevin thank you very much for the opportunity.

>> Absolutely. Thank you Jim.

And taking a lot of notes as you've been talking but one thing that's really sticking out to me, you must be present to win. What was it? Was it Shirley Chisholm said, if you, if you're not at the table, then you're on the menu.

>> That's right. Yeah.

>> So that's important for everyone to remember and one of the best ways to do this is by getting involved in a different ways that puts you in those halls of power. The meetings, the rooms where it happens.

A few Hamilton references coming through the chat so some of that crowd in there. One person said by the way they want to

get you in front of a crowd, Jim. So you got some fans out there.

>> My office is sick of listening to me talk, so this is a pretty cool opportunity. (Laughter).

>> Highlight really quickly some events that we have going on so that everyone who is listening right now can, watching can get a sense of what kinds of events we have going on.

Then we'll I'll share briefly some of the things that some of our professors and other folks at the university are doing. But then we're going to go use the rest of the time for questions and answers.

What I want to show, here we have a lot of things that have happened before the election. We have more than coming up after the election too. So every Friday our Stetson Votes do what we call a weekly wrap up. Where question talk about all the news that has happened in the last week in politics. So that happens on zoom and you can look them up on Instagram for more information on that.

BSA had an ally ship and activism workshop. We had different events happening for Constitution Day to learn about the Supreme Court Justices. National Voter Registration Day was a couple weeks ago. Focusing on voter registration and education as well.

We posted the first debate watch party the other night. And we've got debate watch parties for all the other debates too and

you can look on the Stetson calendar for those.

Our Africana Studies Program have been hosting Race in the 21st century. A series every week on different issues and they just had one on the 2020 Election, it was a faculty panel on that. But they may have more programming coming up on their webinar series that relates to the election as well.

We also have a straw poll coming up next week. Straw poll is just a mock vote. And it's open to every student on campus. And that's just a chance for you to be able to vote for your preferred candidate. And if you vote in that we're going to share with you information about who, all the different amendments and candidates that were beyond your sample ballot so you know exactly who you'll be voting for in the election.

A lot of people ho up and they don't realize there is a lot more than President. There are a lot of other offices. This will give you an opportunity to understand the office dollars and research them in advance so you can add, use them when you're going into vote in person, or give you a heads up when you're voting by mail too.

The League of Women Voters of (indiscernible) have a Know What's On Your Ballot, review the amendments on the ballot on October 7th. We'll be doing get out the vote. We don't have election day anymore, we have election month. So getting out the vote begins actually it's already begun really, because mail ballots have already gone out in the state of Florida in many counties

including Volusia. So we'll be focusing on that many months and we'll have an election night watch party on 11-3.

After election we'll bring our community together to talk about the election and what it means. And to pick up the pieces after this election season. It's a program that student government association did after the 2016 election and we're going to talk with them about bringing that back for the 2020 Election as well.

And then we're also hosting in the spring, once the election is over, a political action training series, so that students can get a really experience shall and mentored, I guess training on how to make political change. So we'll be talking a lot about that in the spring semester.

Then lot of great work happening across the university as well. Every summer with the College of Law, we have a Civil Rights travel course where students can actually you get a full scholarship to pay for this and your course to travel through the different places where, in the southern United States where the freedom riders were riding and different places where Civil Rights history comes alive. So if you haven't been part of that already, just Civil Rights travel course and it will bring you more information about that.

We have our Model Senate Program which is the oldest in the country and the best one in the country as well. Brings people here almost every year except during COVID.



Our Washington Semester Program that our panelists talked about. Our many different groups on campus are doing election outreach. Student Athlete Advisory Committee, Hillel, College of Law Democrats and Republicans. I mentioned Doctor Jackson's Race in the 21st Century.

A lot of things in class too with Doctor Crochet, Doctor Hill, Doctor Galloway, Doctor Truitt, a lot of them build into their courses.

We host a politics 101 Campaign Management Training every year through my office. SGA does a lot of lobbying in Tallahassee for which is a grant given to Florida residents within private institutions. And during most years we host naturalization ceremonies on our Deland campus too. So there is a lot that happens on Stetson that relates to political engagement.

There are a lot of ways to get involved. It's important that we're leveraging the assets of our institution. Especially our (indiscernible) and the knowledge and expertise that we have. And to make sure our entire community is more engaged and more knowledgeable about the election and all these issues.

So, we're going to shift over to doing some Q and A now. We have a few questions that have come through the chat. If the our panelists, if you want to go back to, pull up your video and go ahead and put things this there.

Let's see, the first question is, let's see. All right. One question that's on here is, in doing political work, one thing

that I'm frustrated about is that people oftentimes are close minded. How can, has there ever been a time when you have changed your mind when you've been involved in something political or had a political discussion?

>> Would you like me to go, I'll go first I guess.

>> Of course.

>> I personally change my mind all the time. I think we can all agree these are very interesting times. I don't want to editorialize too much, but I'm not super optimistic on democracy this election. I'm crying. I'm a pretty optimistic guy, but it's tough and I think we could all do a lot more listening. But I can tell you, to provide a little faith in the process. When I'm talking to elected officials which I'm paid to do, they are listeners. These are not, these are pretty good folks that are fairly representative of the electorate in Florida. And when I'm dealing of course with the board of election site. These are smart people but they want to be educated. And you know one of the things I remind people. You're an insurance salesman in seminole county and you decide you want to be in public office and they get elected an all of a stud they're appointed to the education committee. They don't know how Florida education finance program works, right? They don't know, you know all the nuances of higher education information. So they really do want to learn. They can be persuaded. But I've heard of the term educated and I can tell you that minds

are changed. And I can't speak for Washington very much, but I can tell new Tallahassee, there is still a lot of rationality that goes on.

>> Thanks Jim. Amelia, any time you've had your mind changed?

>> Yeah. I mean, so every time we have a leadership meeting with Stetson Votes, we almost always get into some very long discussion about something that would probably most seem minute or unimportant, ranging from what kind of memes are acceptable to send out in emails, to how we should engage with every kind of student we have at Stetson.

And I'm almost always the one who is wrong in those discussions. I'm almost always having my mind changed by my other team members. So, yes, quite often I'm having my mind changed.

>> All right. Next question. If you elect to use a mail-in ballot but you decide to vote in person instead, will that cause any issues?

>> No. As long as you bring in the mail in ballot and turn it in when you go in person to vote. Then you should be fine.

>> Let's see. Is it best to encourage nonimmunocompromised people to vote early and in person so there will be less delay in counting votes?

>> I think I can answer that one. Given the current financial state of the US postal service, and given the pandemic situation, it is expected that there will be a lot of delays in the mail in ballots coming in. And especially when you see in

the federal legislature there has been bills introduced that say all votes must be counted within 24 hours.

So, if you want to ensure that your vote is heard and represented in the out come, it's most likely that that will happen if you vote in person, whether that's early voting or on election day; however if you are immune no compromised or for some other reason cannot vote in person, maybe request a mail-in ballot.

>> All right. Let's see. Looking here for other questions we might have.

Any final comments from Jim, or Amelia before we turn it over to Noel to send us off?

>> (indiscernible) who ever could do to model Senate should do it. It's a fantastic program. If you're a Democrat, play a Republican, if the you're a Republican play a Democrat. It's just a terrific program. It's a great way to meet students from all over the country too.

>> Yeah, I second that too. I had the privilege of being able to do model Senate for five years because I stayed a staff member because they needed someone in a pinch to be Bill Frist. So I was able to jump in. And I'm no heart surgeon but I was able to do my due diligence planning take role so that was good. So, last thing that we'll mention on here, if you have not already registered to vote, if you haven't enrolled in vote by mail, if you aren't sure who you're going to be voting for and

those sorts of things, you can go to [Stetson.edu/vote](http://Stetson.edu/vote), get more information. We'll be doing more updates on the website now that sample ballots have been released and we have more information coming from the election offices. So stay tuned to that over the next week it will be updated even more with more information.

I want to thank Jim and Amelia for the time that you shared with us today and also Ciara. I know she had to leave a little earlier. But we appreciate the support and the expertise that you shared with our Stetson community. And really thankful to have these resources available for our entire community today. Turn it over to Noel now to close us off.

>> I want to say a word of thanks as well. To see and hear from staff and faculty and current students and our successful alums. To hear the passion that Kevin has. To see the scholarship from Ciara that comes out in books and videos. To see the demonstration of leadership that Amelia has and the work that she does. To hear Jim talk about the interdisciplinary experiences that lead to such success professionally from a student on up through the professional life. Those things are part of the life changing experience that represents Stetson University. So you all have been wonderful in the series of what we tried to do here today talking about such an important topic. So, thank you as well.

We do have a few slides on upcoming events. The first one

focuses on COVID testing available in Deland. You see there are dates for rapid antigen testing and also Volusia that is an incredible important for us to consider getting flu shots because of the overlap in the symptoms between flu and COVID-19. So we're certainly encouraging and seeking to facilitate offering testing both for COVID and immunization process for the flu.

On the next slide you'll see the similar opportunities for College of Law testing. All of these are open to Stetson faculty staff and students. And so the first date there, October 8, that Thursday, opportunity for rapid antigen testing and flu shots on the Gulfport campus.

Then a couple of dates in later October on both the Gulfport and Tampa campus as well.

We've heard several references to our race in the 21st Century series here. One that was earlier this week. And the next one, the past is prologue which will be this Friday, October the 2nd feature Doctor Julia Smith, Chair of the Creative Arts Department as well as her students. So don't miss that.

Then finally our next Presidential Weekly Update. This is a Thursday series. So, next Thursday, same time, same place, doctor Chris Roellke will be back hosting another session here. So we hope that you'll join us then.

Again I want to thank everyone for their participation. Our panelists as well as those of you who have joined us today.

Thanks for your engagement with Stetson. Go Hatters.

(End of session).