

## Alfred University taking part in voter registration initiatives

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ALFRED, NY – The Alfred University Division of Student Affairs is overseeing efforts to increase participation in elections by organizing several voter registration events on campus this fall.

The University is involved in three nationwide campaigns aimed at boosting voter turnout. Among them is the “When We All Vote” initiative organized by former First Lady Michelle Obama and a group of entertainers including actor Tom Hanks, composer-playwright Lin-Manuel Miranda, singer-actor Janelle Monae, professional basketball player Chris Paul and country singers Faith Hill and Tim McGraw.

The [“When We All Vote”](#) campaign is a national voter registration and participation initiative which seeks to increase turnout at future elections. The organization has scheduled a “Week of Action” for Sept. 22-29, during which time voter registration events will be planned in communities throughout the country.

Kathy Woughter, vice president of Student Affairs at Alfred University, said efforts to boost civic engagement – which include increasing voter registration and turnout – is part of the Division of Student Affairs’ strategic plan.

“It is important that students learn the importance of voting and learn how to make their voice heard in elections,” said Tricia Debertolis, associate dean of students at Alfred University. “My job is to help them get registered and take part in this important civic activity.”

Debertolis said the University had planned on holding a voter registration event on Sept. 25, which is designated as National Voter Registration Day 2018. That event will be held as part of the University’s involvement in the “When We All Vote” campaign, with voter registration booths set up in both Ade Dining Hall and Powell Campus Center.

Alfred University is registered to participate with two other national organizations promoting voter registration: the [“ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge”](#) and [“Voter Friendly Campus.”](#)

The ALL IN campaign, according to the group’s website, promotes “advancing democracy through political institutions, organizations, and activities...Examples of democratic engagement include voting, contacting elected officials, being active in political organizations, debating issues, supporting causes, and participating in rallies.” Participating campuses are challenges to increase voter participation by at least 50 percent.

Alfred is one of more than 80 colleges and universities in the country, and one of six in New York State, participating in the “Voter Friendly Campus” initiative. Formed in partnership with the Campus Vote Project and Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, “Voter Friendly Campus” helps institutions of higher education promote civic engagement on campus. One of the primary goals is to hike voter registration and turnout at elections.

Debertolis said at least one, possibly two, other voter registration drives will be held on campus this fall. She commended the Allegany County Board of Elections for providing University personnel the training needed to register students.