With the state's election process now well underway, the University of Baltimore's Schaefer Center for Public Policy is assessing its impact on the vote—principally via its role in training more than 6,000 election judges in precincts in Baltimore County and Baltimore City.

**Ann Cotten**, director of the Schaefer Center, said it may take some time to fully evaluate the training procedures, which included a review of the state election judge manual, a presentation tailored to election judges' needs and requirements, hands-on activities and demonstrations of the voting units and electronic poll books, and preparation and distribution of other materials related to providing voter assistance and information on the operations of precinct polling places.

Preliminary results, Cotten said, indicate high levels of trainee satisfaction, which should translate into an election that runs relatively smoothly and quickly.

"Our cadre of trainers, classroom assistants, clerical staff and call center personnel were tireless in their dedication to this important task," Cotten
said. "I deeply appreciate their commitment and willingness to work long hours under pressure in order to ensure election judges receive accurate and timely training to enable them to be successful on Election Day."

Last March, the Schaefer Center was awarded an election judge training contract through a competitive bidding process administered by the Baltimore County Department of Purchasing. After the primary election on Sept. 12, the Schaefer Center reached an agreement with the Baltimore City Board of Elections to provide training for its retained and newly recruited election judges.

Following is a summary of the multiple roles played by the Schaefer Center in assisting the local boards of elections and their election judges:

- Under contract with the Baltimore County Board of Elections, the Schaefer Center developed a training curriculum designed to instruct adult learners in Maryland election procedures and the operation of the voting equipment and systems used in the 2006 election. The training program included a review of the state election judge manual, a PowerPoint presentation tailored to county needs and requirements, hands-on activities and demonstrations of the voting units and electronic poll books and preparation and distribution of other materials related to providing voter assistance and the operation of the precinct polling places.

- Before the September primary, the Schaefer Center trained more than 2,600 election judges for Baltimore County. From July 5 through the weekend before the election, 163 training sessions took place in various
classroom locations throughout the county. After the primary election, the center also provided mandatory chief judge refresher training for Baltimore County’s 436 chief judges and conducted classes for 500 new election judges hired for the general election.

• Pursuant to an agreement reached with the Baltimore City Board of Elections on September 29, the Schaefer Center trained about 2,900 Baltimore City election judges in a span of 22 days from Oct. 14 through Nov. 5. Building upon its experience in the county, the University’s professors and the Schaefer Center's professional staff quickly assembled a team of qualified instructors and classroom assistants to provide refresher training to election judges retained from the primary election, mandatory refresher training for all chief judges and classroom training of all new judges. More than half of the election judges serving in the general election were newly appointed election judges. All of the Baltimore City election judges received the important hands-on training and practice on the touchscreen voting units and the electronic poll books. To ensure a full complement of election judges at the precinct polling places on Election Day, the Baltimore City Board of Elections contracted with the Schaefer Center to use its phone bank and pool of professionally trained interviewers to contact more than 2,000 election judges to verify their availability and service on Election Day.

• Experts in election law, technology communication and adult learning were used to design the training program to meet the needs of adult learners. Unique features of the center's election judge training program are 1) small class sizes, generally 30 or less; 2) hands-on training with
the Accuvote Touchscreen voting units and electronic poll books; and 3) professional instruction. The Schaefer Center's instructors are drawn primarily from the faculty of the University of Baltimore's School of Public Affairs and other area universities.

- Under a grant from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, the center participated in the Help America Vote College Program for the second consecutive election. The University of Baltimore is one of only four colleges and universities to be awarded a grant in 2004 and 2006. Utilizing student election judge recruiters with faculty encouragement, approximately 400 people from the University of Baltimore and surrounding universities were recruited to serve as election judges in the Baltimore metropolitan area.

One measure of success of the training programs is attendees' level of satisfaction with the course and how well they believe they mastered the course material. Reported below are the preliminary results of evaluations completed and processed by attendees at the Baltimore County and Baltimore City training sessions. To date, a total of 1,970 evaluations have been processed for Baltimore County and 434 have been processed for Baltimore City.

**Baltimore County Training Program**

- 97 percent of 1,647 attendees thought the training material was explained in an easy to understand manner.
- 98 percent of 1,514 attendees thought the hands-on activities were helpful.
• 96 percent of 1,483 attendees felt they adequately understand voter qualifications and rights.
• 94 percent of 1,485 attendees felt they are adequately trained for their role on Election Day.
• 75 percent of 1,612 attendees rated the course as "A" and 23 percent rated the course as "B" on a scale of "A" through "F."

Baltimore City Training Program
• 97 percent of 365 attendees thought the training material was explained in an easy to understand manner.
• 99 percent of 379 attendees thought the hands-on activities were helpful.
• 92 percent of 347 attendees felt they adequately understood voter qualifications and rights.
• 89 percent of 344 attendees felt they are adequately trained for their role on Election Day.
• 56 percent of 341 attendees rated the course as "A" and 35 percent rated the course as "B" on a scale of "A" through "F."

Through a clause in the Baltimore County agreement, other jurisdictions in Maryland can contract with the Schaefer Center to provide similar training for their election judges.

Established in 1985, the Schaefer Center for Public Policy is an applied research unit within the School of Public Affairs. The center’s mission is to bring the University of Baltimore’s academic expertise to bear in solving problems faced by government and nonprofit organizations. The center
offers the following services: strategic planning, performance measurement, program evaluation and analysis, opinion research, management consulting, management training and professional development. It is through the Schaefer Center that the University of Baltimore and the Yale Gordon College of Liberal Arts meet a central component of the University’s mission of applied research and public service to the Baltimore metropolitan area and to the state of Maryland.

The University of Baltimore is a member of the University System of Maryland and comprises the School of Law, the Yale Gordon College of Liberal Arts and the Merrick School of Business.