

UB Centers to Assist State's Local Election Boards

U.S. Election Commission Grant to Recruit College Students to Serve as Election Judges

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A grant from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission to the University of Baltimore's Schaefer Center for Public Policy and the Center for Citizenship and Applied Politics will allow the centers to provide assistance to Maryland's local election boards during the upcoming election cycle. The commission's Help America Vote College Program encourages college students to support state and local governments in the administration of elections by serving as nonpartisan election judges, poll workers or assistants.

The University of Baltimore was one of only 19 grant awardees nationwide for 2006 and one of only four colleges across the country to receive grants for both the 2004 and 2006 Help America Vote College Programs. The \$19,000 grant, an outcome of the Help America Vote Act passed by the United States Congress in 2002 and awarded by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, will be used by the Schaefer Center and the Center for Citizenship and Applied Politics to promote college students'

direct participation in the election process in metropolitan Baltimore and throughout the state. The program will be managed and supervised by the centers, using assigned University faculty, staff and students.

UB will administer the program by working with local election directors and their staffs to place the students as election judges and assistants in the upcoming primary and general elections.

According to the State Board of Elections, more than 21,000 residents will be employed by the 24 local boards of election in Maryland to conduct the primary and general elections in the 1,767 precincts where an estimated two million citizens will cast their ballots. These part-time election judges are responsible for the general supervision of the polling place—checking in and verifying voters, handling provisional ballots, overseeing the handling of voting machines and providing assistance to voters. Under Maryland law, election judges must be registered voters in the state.

Qualified college students may also be hired in Maryland to assist the local election boards in other roles, such as providing technical assistance with the operation of the voting system and the delivery of ballots. College students, whose knowledge and experience with computers is generally greater than the population as a whole, will be of added assistance and benefit to the local boards of elections.

With more than 230,000 students enrolled in Maryland's 16 community colleges, 13 public institutions and more than 25 private colleges and universities, Maryland is well suited to rely on college students to help

conduct an election. The University of Baltimore is centrally located among the majority of these colleges and universities, and the recruiters to be employed by the University's Help America Vote College Program will be able to contact and disseminate information to students at all of these institutions.

The student body of the University of Baltimore, although predominately from the Baltimore metropolitan area, boasts students from every county in the state. It is in the top tier in terms of racial and ethnic diversity among the 11 degree-granting institutions in the University System of Maryland. This array of students will ensure a broad reach for the outreach program.

The student election-judge program will include a number of recruitment techniques, including a devoted Web site, posters and flyers, advertising, public service announcements and targeted mailings. The implementation of the 2006 Help America Vote Program at the University of Baltimore and its final report will assist the U.S. Election Assistance Commission as well as the Maryland State Board of Elections and the local boards of elections in planning for the administration of future elections.

The UB program Web site and an application form to become a student election judge can be accessed at <http://scpp.ubalt.edu/~Election>. Those interested in becoming an election judge can also contact UB's Help America Vote College Program at 410.837.6145 or toll-free at 888.878.5166.

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.