

Conservation Voices: On National Voter Registration Day, Milwaukee nonprofits highlight their work to make voting more accessible

Posted on Tuesday, Sep 22, 2020

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MILWAUKEE – Today, Wisconsin Conservation Voices and their partners held a press conference on National Voter Registration Day to bring awareness to the work they are doing to help communities of color and young people in Milwaukee register to vote.

These partner organizations have built lasting relationships with their communities and are using those deep connections to encourage voter participation and urge people to register to vote.

Walnut Way and Wisconsin Conservation Voices are running a regular walk through voter registration site in the Lindsay Heights neighborhood. Progressive Community Health Centers is texting their patients with voting information. The American Federation of Teachers MATC (Local 212) is engaging every teaching department within their union to assist students in voter registration. The YWCA Southeast Wisconsin and all partners have agreed to offer their employees paid time off to vote on Election Day, and the Milwaukee Rep worked with local artists to create [four music videos](#) to inspire young voters.

The media event was held at Walnut Way Conservation Corp., around the corner from their regular walk through voter registration site. There were people on site registering to vote. A link to the online portal that Wisconsin Conservation Voices and Wisconsin Voices created to make voter registration more accessible can be found at this link: wcv.votewisconsin.com.

The partners gave statements on their efforts and how they are ensuring that their communities' voices are heard. It is through their longstanding commitments to their communities that these organizations are working to help all citizens have the right to vote easily and safely.

Richard Diaz, State Director of Voter Registration, Wisconsin Conservation Voices had this to say about voting:

“We are all dedicated to making voting accessible because our communities deserve to have our voices heard. Communities of color and young people are impacted most by voter suppression tactics and we are putting all the resources we have into giving them the opportunity to participate in our democracy.”

Antonio Butts, Executive Director of Walnut Way Conservation Corp. made this comment:

“We want to inspire people to take part in their civic responsibility to vote and let their voice be heard. Walnut Way has set up a voter registration site on 16th and North avenue (with Wisc. Cons Voices) in order to make voting and registration more accessible. We want to share accurate information for residents and remove any barriers they may have to make their vote count.”

Ginny Finn, President and CEO of YWCA Southeast Wisconsin said:

“100 years ago, YWCAs throughout the nation worked to secure the right to vote for women - a right and a civic duty we take very seriously to this day. Our mission is to eliminate racism and empower women, which includes a commitment to just access to the ballot box for everyone in our community. We believe Election Day should be a work holiday for all citizens; as a member of this business community, we are pleased to set an example and make it easy for our employees to exercise their right to vote.”

Jeffrey Mosser, Associate Director of Education of the Milwaukee Repertory Theater stated:

“Be counted or get crumbs.”

Kevin Mulvenna, Vice President of the American Federation of Teachers

MATC (Local 212) had this to say:

“As a teacher of American government and history for over thirty years, I have made it a priority to encourage my students to engage in our participatory democracy. In all those years I have never felt the urgency that I do today.”

Jenni Sevenich, CEO of Progressive Community Health Centers wasn't able to be at the media event, but added this comment:“At Progressive Community Health Centers we know that achieving health equity takes more than rhetoric; it starts at the ballot box. A majority of health outcomes are driven by social determinants such as access to education, employment and housing resources. These factors are influenced by the policy decisions made by our elected officials. As a healthcare provider that serves Milwaukee's most vulnerable communities, Progressive CHC values the importance of promoting civic engagement through nonpartisan voter registration efforts. We have done this through innovative text message campaigns and targeted patient outreach. Our agency is also proud to join other local businesses in making Election Day a paid holiday for staff so employees don't have to choose between safely exercising their right to vote and getting a paycheck.”