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WEC: Voter Education Project wins national award

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Elections Commission this week received the 2023 Innovators Award from the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED) for the WEC's "Elections 101" voter education project launched in 2022.

The WEC was presented with the award July 26 at the organization's summer conference in Charleston, South Carolina.

NASED presents the Innovators Award every two years, in odd years following an election year. WEC Administrator Meagan Wolfe received the award on behalf of the agency.

The Elections 101 project – found at elections.wi.gov/101 – includes a four-part video series, with each video exploring various aspects of election administration in Wisconsin. The voter education effort was directed toward high school students, in conjunction with the Department of Public Instruction, and the general public, via partnerships with the Wisconsin Newspaper Association and the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association.

The project was featured in nearly 40 newspapers and on radio stations across the state and received positive feedback from educators and others. The agency is hoping to expand and continue this effort for 2024.

WEC Administrator Meagan Wolfe said: "We're honored to be the recipients of the 2023 NASED Innovators Award for Elections 101, a project whose goal was to provide voters and members of the public with a baseline of knowledge about how election administration really works in Wisconsin. We believe empowering voters through education is critical to building trust in our system, and we hope this project

will inspire other states to launch similar programs of their own ahead of the 2024 election cycle."

WEC Public Information Officer Riley Vetterkind said: "We're grateful to the organizations that partnered with us to make this critical election education project possible. Elections 101 is one of the WEC's answers to the significant volume of questions and concerns people have about elections. This project aims to go back to the basics by providing the public with the tools they need to think critically about future claims they may hear."

The WEC produced the video series in conjunction with a Madison vendor, Tack Video Production. The Department of Public Instruction created a series of lessons plans to accompany each of the videos in high school classrooms. Along with the two statewide media organizations, other partnerships with Elections 101 included the city of Madison, Dane County, Badger Boys State, Edgewood High School, Milwaukee Bradley Tech High School, and Disability Rights Wisconsin.

Learn more about the NASED Innovators Award at this link: https://www.nased.org/news/2023innovatorsaward

Elections 101 can be viewed at elections.wi.gov/101