



**TRIBAL
COLLEGES &
UNIVERSITIES**

**VOTER
TOOLKIT**



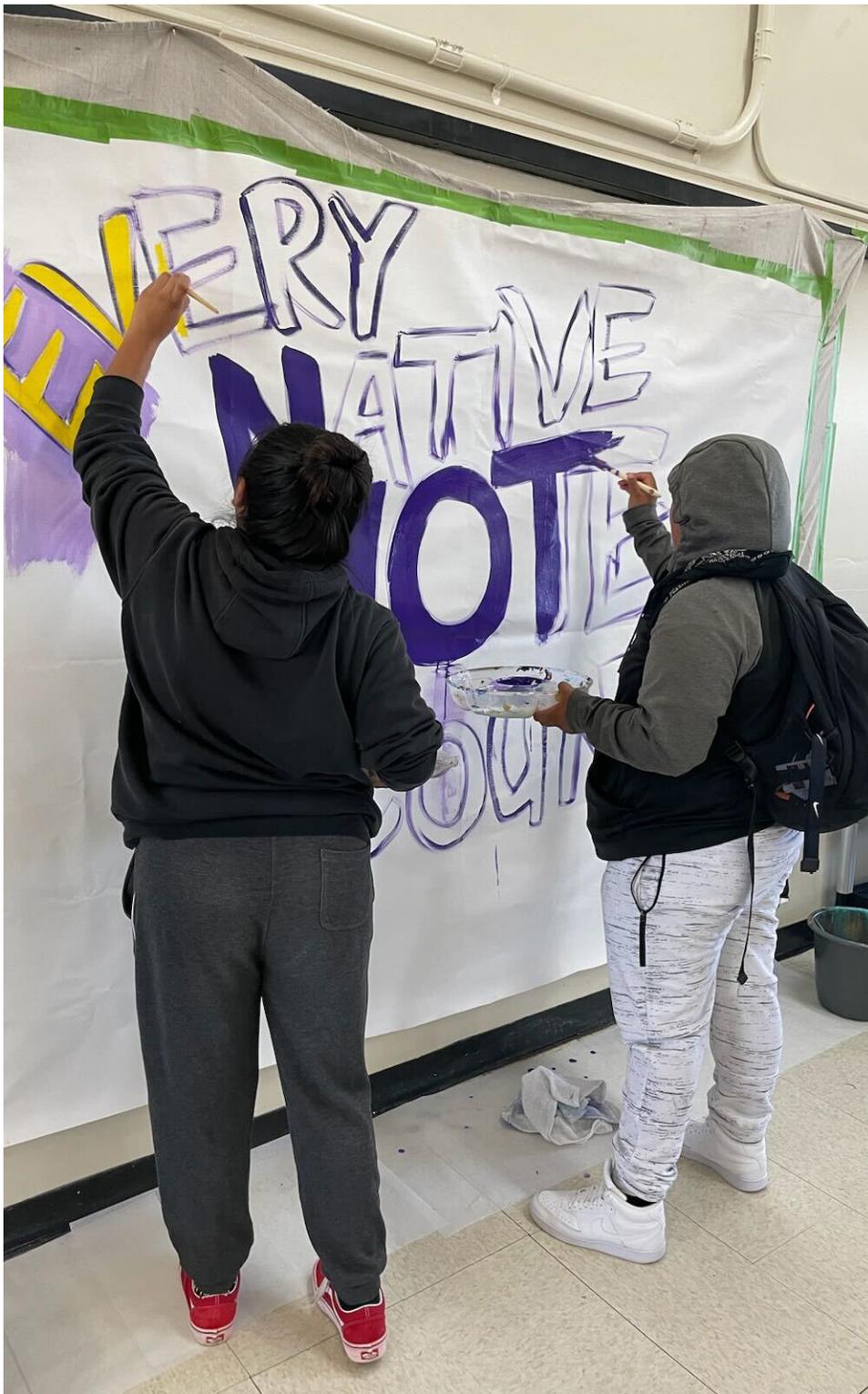


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VOTER RESOURCES

**Check
voter
registration**
[Vote.org](https://www.vote.org)

**Information,
laws, and
deadlines**
[Vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov)

**Native
voter
advocacy**
[Vote.NARF.org](https://www.vote.narf.org)

Student voter ID resources and assistance
[VoteRiders.org/student](https://www.voteriders.org/student)

GETTING OUT THE VOTE WHILE GETTING TO CLASS

TCUS COME FROM ACTIVISM & ENGAGEMENT

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) were established as part of a larger “self-determination” movement in the 1960s. After decades of injustice in the American education system, tribal governments and Native communities saw higher education as an opportunity to build economic and political capital while maintaining connections to culture and community. The Navajo Nation established the first TCU—Navajo Community College, now operating as Diné College—in 1968 in Tsaile, Arizona. **As institutions, TCUs are the product of decades of activism and engagement from Native people and Native voters.**

THE POWER OF THE STUDENT VOTE

There are many deadlines to juggle as a college student. While it can seem like just one more task to keep track of, voting is one of the most important ways for us, as Native people, to demonstrate our collective voice. **As a Native student at a TCU, you are a vital part of that collective voice.**

THE FIRST TCU

Navajo Community College, 1986

Now operating as Diné College

Tsaile, Arizona



NATIVE YOUTH ARE LEADING THE WAY

As a TCU student, you are educating not just yourself, but your community by sharing the knowledge you gain on campus with your community at home. The same can be true for voting. There are numerous ways to help friends, classmates, and family members get ready for Election Day. **We can all contribute to building Native political power, representation, and impact.** This toolkit contains tips and information for getting yourself and your community ready to get out the Native vote on Election Day.



MAKE A VOTING PLAN

Make a voting plan with friends and family to ensure your voices are heard. Double check to see if you are registered to vote every year.

TO MAKE YOUR PLAN, ASK YOURSELF:

- Will I vote in person or by mail?
- Do I need to request an absentee ballot in my state?
- Is my voter registration current and up-to-date?
- Do I know where my ballot will be delivered?
- Do I know my nearest polling place?

If you aren't sure of the answers to these questions, contacting the elections administrator in your preferred state or district is a good place to start. Contact information for local elections administrators can be found at [USA.gov/state-election-office](https://www.usa.gov/state-election-office).

KNOW HOW TO GET THERE:

If you plan on voting in person, check your polling place and make sure you have transportation to get there on time. If you can, offer a ride to friends or family members.

KNOW STATE LAWS:

Make sure you understand the voter ID laws in your state and share what you learn within your community.

More info on voter ID laws on page 6!

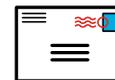
BE INFORMED:

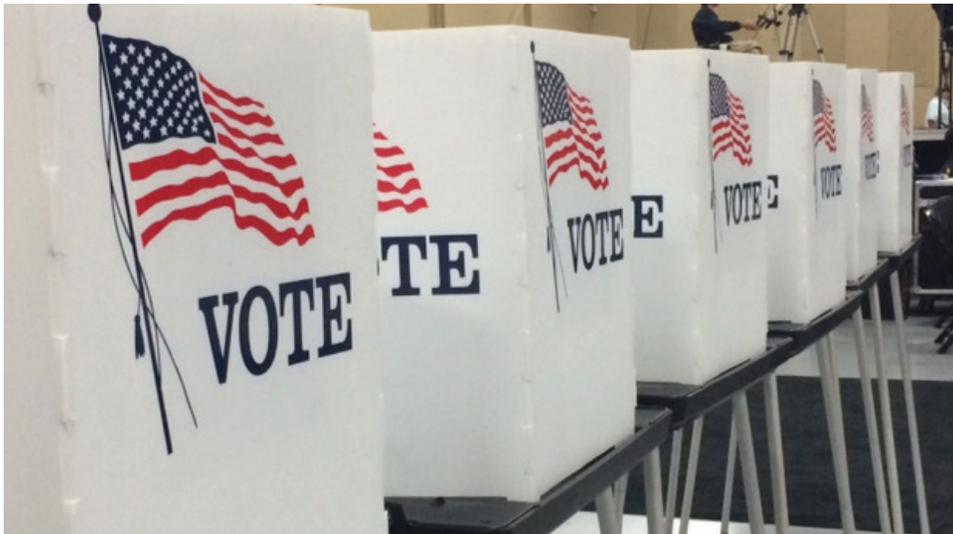
Be sure to give yourself time to do your research before each election. Being a student can be overwhelming with tons of assignments and deadlines to keep track of, so don't let an election sneak up on you. Set aside some time to look up your sample ballot and see all the races and candidates you'll be voting on ahead of time, so you won't have any surprises on election day. Look up each candidate and keep an eye out for voter guides from trustworthy sources for additional help breaking down the key positions of the candidates. If it seems like a lot to remember, it may help to make a note of your vote to take with you to the polls.

VOTER SUPPRESSION:

If you experience voter suppression, intimidation, or discrimination, call or email the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) immediately.

Call **1-866-OUR-VOTE** (1-866-687-8683) and email vote@NARF.org



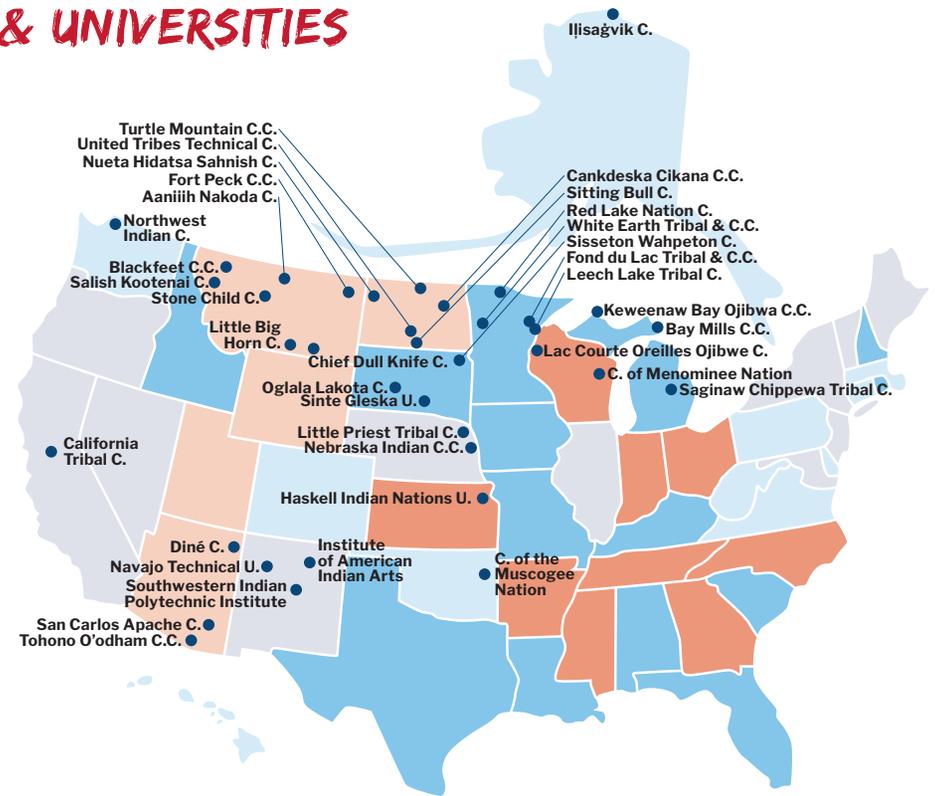


VOTER ID LAWS

Voter identification laws have long been a point of contention. Strict voter ID laws disproportionately affect American Indians and Alaska Natives as well as many other racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States. These laws may especially affect you if you are a Native Student at a TCU outside of your home state.

It is important to check for updates to voting laws, particularly when it comes to required forms of identification, and be prepared to provide required identification. Strict voter identification laws (including laws that target tribal IDs being used to vote) have been cited as one form of voter suppression for sovereign Tribal Nations and diverse minority communities. After the 2022 midterm election, many states passed increasingly strict voting ID laws. Check to see what may be required for your State and visit these resources to learn more.

UNITED STATES VOTER ID LAWS & TRIBAL COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES



Strict Photo ID Law
AR, GA, IN, KS, MS, NC, OH TN, WI

Strict Non-Photo ID Law
AZ, MT, NC, UT, WY

Voters need to confirm their identity with an acceptable ID when they vote in person.

Non-Strict Photo ID Law
AL, FL, ID, IA, KY, LA, MI, MN, MO, NH, RI, SC, SD, TX

Non-Strict Non-Photo ID Law
AK, CO, CT, DE, HI, MA, OK, PA, VA, WA, WV

If voters don't provide an acceptable ID when voting in person, there are other ways to cast a ballot that counts.

No Voter ID
CA, DC, IL, ME, MD, NE, NV, NJ, NM, NY, OR, VT

Most voters don't need to show ID to vote in person, with the exception of some first-time voters.



ELECTION F.A.Q.

WHAT ARE PRIMARY ELECTIONS?

Primary elections are the first election of the season. Primary elections determine which candidates will proceed to the general election. Primaries occur during both midterms as well as presidential elections.

Some primaries are closed, meaning that you're only allowed to cast your vote for a candidate from the party you're registered with, while other primaries are open, meaning that you can vote for a candidate regardless of party. Check which system is used in your state and do your candidate research accordingly.

WHAT ARE GENERAL ELECTIONS?

General elections are the final contests between candidates from each party. The outcome determines the person who will hold the contested office until the next election.

WHAT ARE MIDTERM ELECTIONS?

Midterm elections take place halfway between presidential elections. Congressional elections are held every two years, with one-third of the Senate and all the House of Representatives decided during midterm elections.

WHAT ARE REFERENDUMS, INITIATIVES, AND SPECIAL ELECTIONS?

Known by different names across the country, referendums, initiatives, and special elections are elections that can be held throughout the year based on different criteria. For instance, in some states, initiatives and referendums can be put on the ballot through petitioning of the public. Special elections can be filed to fill vacancies in elected office, consider public funding measures (like education or emergency services), or a number of other purposes.

WHAT ARE TRIBAL ELECTIONS?

Tribal elections are distinct and separate from U.S. elections, but are just as important to be engaged and involved in. Tribal Nations throughout the country have different systems when it comes to voting. Some Tribal Nations require voters to be present in-person, others have adopted vote-by-mail. Check in with your tribal administration to get an understanding of how to engage in your Nation's elections.

FOR OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS

UPDATING YOUR REGISTRATION

Students often go to school in a different state or jurisdiction than where they call home. Depending on your housing and how much time you spend at home or at school, you might be eligible to either vote in the election at your home residence or you can register to vote in the district where you live at school. If you live near campus permanently, you may want to take part in the election in that district. If you live on campus temporarily and return home at breaks, you may want to continue voting at home.

REQUESTING AN ABSENTEE BALLOT

An absentee ballot allows voters to complete and return a ballot in advance of election day when they are physically unable to be present at the polls. Each state has absentee ballots upon request, but the deadlines and requirements on how to use absentee ballots are different based on the state or local jurisdiction that you're voting within. Sometimes, similar to Voter ID laws, absentee ballot requirements can be made intentionally difficult or obscure in order to suppress the vote, and may especially affect you if you are a Native Student at a TCU outside of your home state.

USA.gov/absentee-voting outlines exactly how to find absentee voting requirements in your state, and how you can go about requesting an absentee ballot.



CONNECT & ORGANIZE

KNOW ELECTION HOLIDAYS

Civic Holidays are days of action that strengthen and celebrate our country's democracy. They bring together a wide range of organizations and communities—including thousands of local, state, and national partners. These partners have helped millions of voters cast their ballots through fun and creative civic holiday celebrations hosted around the country every year. Use these holidays to guide your engagement around the election and carry forward messages to other community members.

**National Voter
Registration Day**

**National Voter
Education Week**

Vote Early Day

Election Hero Day

Please visit **civicholidays.org** to stay up to date on important voting deadlines and holidays.

SOCIAL MEDIA & NATIVE VOTE

Social media is an essential aspect of engaging with fellow Native voters and carrying forward election information to your community and family.

Use #EveryNativeVoteCounts on any platform to broaden the reach of your message and join in with other Native Vote Coordinators throughout the country.

There are a number of infographics, PSAs, a Native Vote communications toolkit, and other resources that you can use to engage effectively on social media at NativeVote.org/about/native-vote-resources/

Use
#Every
NativeVote
Counts

Scan for
Social Media
Resources:



RAISE AWARENESS

What and when are the important deadlines and dates? Work with your community to raise awareness of your state's deadlines for early voting, submitting mail in ballots, voter registration, and more. How will you get to the polls on Election Day? Do any friends or family members also need rides? Organizing rides to the polls is a great way to get out the vote!



There are many organizations in Indian Country doing the work of organizing and mobilizing Native voters throughout the country. Most of them rely on dedicated volunteers and community members to carry forward their impact to the polls. Organizations like the **Native American Rights Fund (NARF)**, **Native Organizers Alliance (NOA)**, and **VoteRiders** utilize the time and attention of student organizers to mobilize voters. You can also contact Native Vote Organizations near your home or TCU campus.

If you don't have a civic engagement organization on your campus, consider starting one! One person can play a big role in mobilizing others, but even a small group of dedicated advocates can make transformative change. Speak to your campus administration about the requirements to start a student organization and ask about any services or initiatives your college already has in place to help student voters. Find ways to set up voter registration tables around campus and integrate voter registration and education into your campus environment.

Organizations like the **Students Learn Students Vote Coalition** provide tips and resources on how to organize impactful voter engagement initiatives on college campuses, and **Campus Vote Project** is one organization that offers paid opportunities for students to get training and support to lead civic engagement efforts and make a difference on their campus.



Scan here to access the **Communications Toolkit** with guidance for making the most out of your TCU Voter Toolkit.

“ Native Americans were **CIVICALLY ENGAGED** before the term was coined or trending.

Four hundred years ago, you would have seen our people working to ensure that the **WHOLE COMMUNITY** was fed, sheltered, and protected.”

—NANCY DEERE-TURNEY
Muscogee Nation



[NCAI.org](https://www.ncai.org)