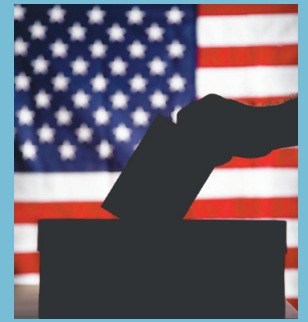


# BALLOT BOX BULLETIN

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF KIDS VOTING USA JUNE 2011



## June Educator of the Month

KVUSA is pleased to announce that **Shelby Berthram** is the June Educator of the Month. Ms. Berthram is a first grade teacher at St. Joseph's Indian School in Chamberlain, South Dakota. Shelby Berthram always teaches her students not only how important it is to vote but also how crucial it is to be educated about our democracy and those running for office. Her enthusiasm and civics knowledge makes her a great role model for the students, staff and friends in Chamberlain.

Kids Voting USA truly appreciates the work and passion Ms. Shelby Berthram demonstrates for our program.

## BOOK CLUB

KVUSA is giving everyone more time to read the book titled, **Uncharitable**. It will be the book for June as well. If you haven't picked up a copy, do so today. Make sure to post to the KVUSA web site your thoughts and opinions about the book.

## CONFERENCE

Join us in Las Vegas on Oct. 20th and 21st for the 2011 Conference!!



## Newest Citizens Register to Vote

Thirteen seniors from Hamilton Township High School demonstrated great civic spirit as they attended the May Naturalization Ceremony and then registered Ohio's newest American citizens to vote. At the event 125 individuals from 27 countries were sworn in as citizens. The youngest was 19 and the oldest was 72. Kids Voting Central Ohio high school registrars attended the event on their first day of summer vacation, having completed their senior year the week before the ceremony.

Keynote speaker at the event was Dr. Jeffrey Wadsworth, President and CEO of Battelle, the largest private research organization in the world. Dr. Wadsworth shared his experiences as a native of England, having lived all over the world before becoming a U.S. Citizen in 1985.



## New Web site is Live

On May 10th the Kids Voting USA new web site went live. The site now is showing the world the amazing work of our organization. With the pictures, videos and news blog, it is capturing the attention of browsers. The site has had over 2,000 page views with visitors from not only the United States but also the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia and a few others. Besides the homepage, the educator login page is the highest viewed page.

However to keep the site fresh, the national office needs your help. Send high quality pictures and videos along with stories about your latest event and we will display it.

*Don't forget to follow KVUSA on facebook and twitter!!*

facebook

twitter

## To Catch A Senior

Written by: Maida Buckley KV Alaska Executive Director

Three hours and forty-two minutes! This number represents the length of daylight in Fairbanks, Alaska, on December 21, the winter solstice and shortest day of the year. Even for lovers of the arctic and the accompanying winter sports they invite, when spring arrives and daylight lengthens to more than twenty hours, anyone, especially high school seniors, may become distracted. For these seniors thoughts drift to the playful: senior skip day, spring proms, summer barbecues, rather than the more serious elements surrounding high school graduation and planning eventual career paths.

However, born from this challenge of keeping student's focused during this frenetic time, the Senior Voter Registration Drive emerged.

Working with the American Government teachers from Ben Eielson, Lathrop, Monroe Catholic and West Valley High Schools, we developed a plan to focus on these seniors' impending civic responsibilities. More than just having a booth promoting and easing the registration process, teachers wanted a focused



classroom presentation where instruction would highlight the importance of voting. In this manner, voter registration would be viewed as a necessary first step in this process and not the end product of a local voter registration drive. As Monroe High School teacher George Peterson stated, "One of the most valuable lessons a government teacher can present to his or her students is the importance of voting and getting them registered is a great first step on their journey to suffrage." Although several venues offer voter registration – online and at state offices -- this represents the first-time, the process had been brought directly to the classroom and has engaged students in a compelling format.

As Kids Voting coordinator, I worked closely with involved teachers in developing an extensive lesson plan. Using the Kids Voting curriculum as a guide, we choose appropriate warm-up activities, a central lesson that spoke to the importance of using your voice in a democratic setting, (teachers chose different lessons) and a closure activity where we shared the State of Alaska election web site and registration forms. This visit to the web site also highlighted information on absentee voting that will pertain to the many seniors who plan to attend college "outside", the local term for sites out of Alaska.

In my role as Kids Voting coordinator, I traveled to each school, and teamed directly with the teachers to present the lessons. The teachers had prepared their class members for a guest speaker, and in each class, attentive students warmly welcomed me. When the warm-up activity revealed that nearly 75% of their 18-25 demographic do not vote, they were startled, but felt challenged to improve upon that statistic. In the central part of the lesson, students participated eagerly because they wanted their voice heard. By the closure of the lesson, students were eager to complete the voter registration process. After the lesson, West Valley teacher Amy Gallaway appreciated . . . "that the voter registration drive enabled me to accomplish what I always wanted to do in class, break down barriers to voting."

Subsequent to this classroom civics presentation, participating teachers received positive feedback from their students and from several parents who phoned to express their gratitude. Tammy Brewer, a parent whose student participated in the drive, wrote Eielson teacher Liz Hursh, "It's so great that you took the time to encourage my son to register and to vote as a young adult. Thanks for giving him the opportunity to register. What a wonderful opportunity; he came home very excited about it!"

With the success of this initial effort, teachers hope to make this activity a yearly tradition. Rather than leave this important responsibility to chance, students now are offered the opportunity to register to vote in a way that highlights the need for an informed electorate. This culminating activity of the K-12 Kids Voting curriculum, short of an all-expense trip to Hawaii, represents the ultimate graduation gift.

## KVUSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **Diana Carlin, Ph. D.**

Chairman

Associate Vice President for Graduate Education & Professor of Communication, Saint Louis University  
dbcinks@yahoo.com

### **Marty Petty**

Vice Chair

Chief Executive Officer  
Creative Loafing  
martypetty@mac.com

### **Javier J. Aldape**

Secretary/Treasurer

V.P./Niche Products

The E.W. Scripps Company  
javier.aldape@scripps.com

### **Katie Biggie**

KV Western New York

kjbiggie@buffalo.edu

### **Richard Coe**

KV Southeast Pennsylvania

rocoe@comcast.net

### **Bobby Fox**

KV Tampa Bay

bobby@kvfb.org

### **Geoffrey J. Gonella**

Founder/President

Cornerstone Government Affairs, LLC  
ggonella@cgagroup.com

### **Peter Harkness**

Publisher Emeritus

Governing

pharkness@governing.com

### **Pamela Johnson**

Executive Director

Reynolds Journalism Institute

University of Missouri

johnsonpamela@missouri.edu

### **Mark Morneau**

V.P./Information Technology

Gannett Co., Inc.

MMORNEAU@gannett.com

### **Ron Thornburgh**

Senior VP of Business Development

NIC Inc

ront@nicusa.com

### **Rachel Willis**

Executive Director

rwillis@kidsvotingusa.org

KVUSA is managed by **KPA.**