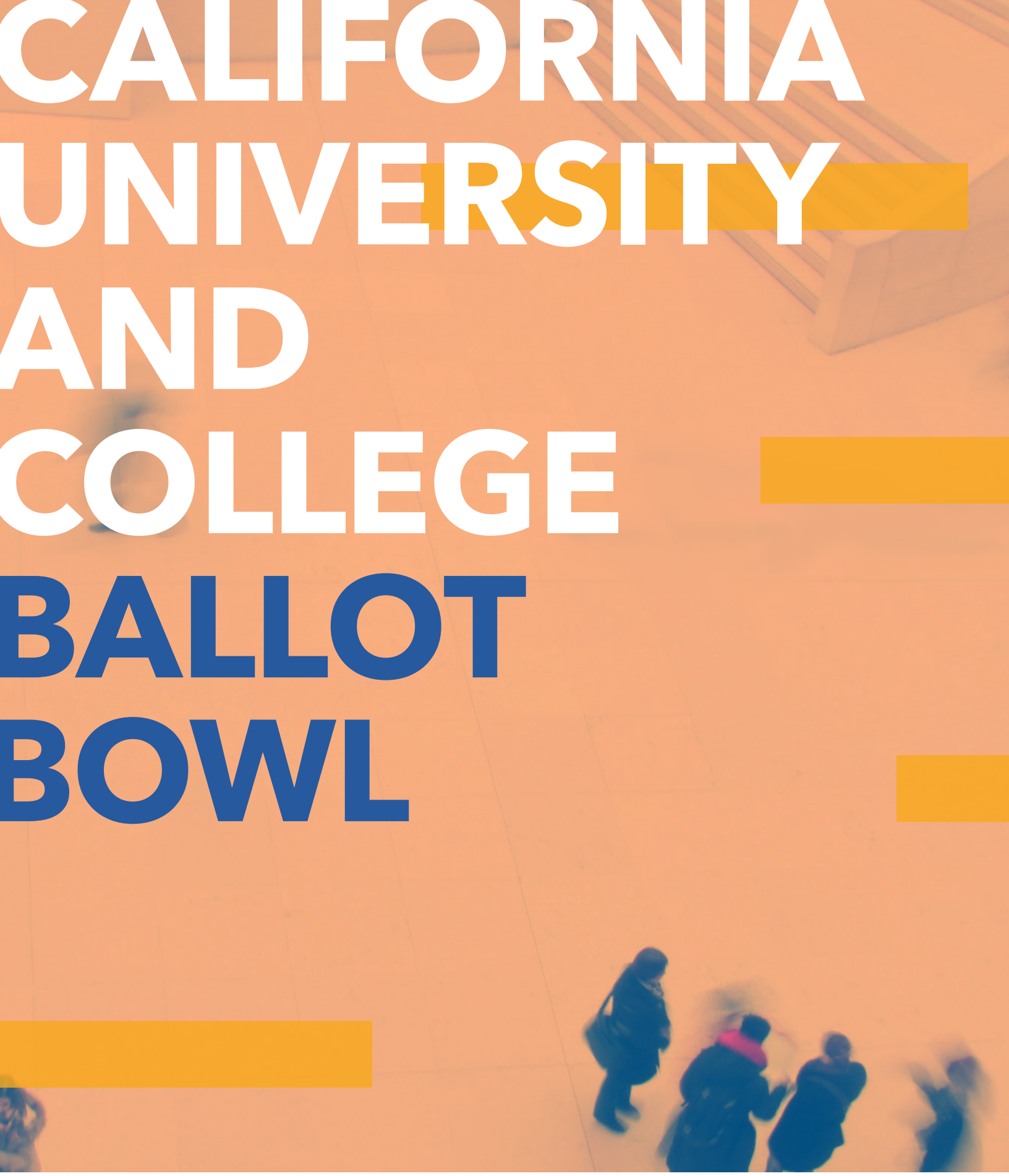
CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE BALLOT BOWL



VOTE CALIFORNIA
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ALEX PADILLA
California Secretary of State

Brief Overview

The California Students Vote Project, a project of the California Secretary of State in partnership with the California Lieutenant Governor and a coalition of nonprofit organizations, aims to increase civic engagement and voter participation among California students. While voters between the ages of 18 – 24 tend to have the lowest turnout of any age group, California has witnessed an increase in youth voter registration since the 2016 presidential election.

In 2016, via landmark Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and a resolution, the California Students Vote Project partnered with the leadership of California's major public systems of higher learning, including the California Community College (CCC), California State University (CSU), and University of California (UC) systems. In 2018 the California Students Vote Project established an MOU with the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) higher education system. With AICCU's participation, all major institutions of higher education in California have solidified commitments to partner with the Secretary of State's office and encourage student voter registration efforts.

Leading up to the 2018 General Election, the Secretary of State's office launched the first ever California University and College Ballot Bowl. During this nine-week competition, more than 45 public and private institutions cooperated to register nearly 11,000 students to vote. This nearly doubled the number of registered students in the last midterm election in 2014. California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo was the Inaugural California University and College Ballot Bowl champion, as their students and administration worked hard to register 3,178 students to vote.

In 2019, AB 963 codified the SVP into state law, allowing the Secretary of State's Office to continue the mission of engaging California students in the democratic process. The Student Civic and Voter Empowerment Act will allow the Secretary of State's Office to continue the mission of engaging students in the democratic process by providing funding for 2 permanent positions to staff the project, in addition to providing funding for community colleges to hire Civic Voter Empowerment Coordinators. 2020 will be a landmark year for not just our state, but also the nation, and now our students and our state will be better equipped for both the upcoming Primary and General Elections.

In an effort to build on that success, the Secretary of State's office invites you to participate in the second California University and College Ballot Bowl, a challenge that will award campuses for engaging their students in the democratic process and registering them to vote. The purpose of creating this friendly challenge is to incentivize campuses to adopt policies and practices that boost civic engagement, to inspire students to get involved in voter registration campaigns, and to acknowledge those who are leading the way on civic engagement at California's colleges and universities. The Ballot Bowl will allow the campuses of the California Community College, California State University, and University of California systems to compete among each other for the highest number of students registered and the highest percentage of the student body registered.

This year, we are adding a new challenge to the Ballot Bowl competition: the largest number of students registered conditionally at an on-campus polling location or vote center. As the Voter's Choice Act expands throughout the state and as more institutions begin to host polling locations or voter centers on their campuses, we aim to honor the hard work of institutions who continue to register their students to vote past the E-15 registration deadline, which was previously the end of the Ballot Bowl competition.

California's youth are already actively engaged in improving their communities, and many college campuses have taken steps to support their work. For various reasons however, that activism does not always translate to the ballot box. Californian students have a chance to build upon the momentum they have created with their activism by registering to vote and showing up to the polls. We look forward to fostering an even greater sense of civic engagement and responsibility in our state's future.

Sincerely,

ALEX PADILLA
California Secretary of State

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I. California University and College Ballot Bowl

Campuses across the state will compete with one another over the course of eleven weeks to register the most students to vote. The competition will award campuses based on the number of voter registrations between the CCC, CSU, UC, and AICCU systems. Overall, four competitions will take place at the same time under the Students Vote Project.

- All 114 community colleges will be invited to participate.
- All 23 CSU campuses will be invited to participate.
- All 10 UC campuses will be invited to participate.
- All 78 AICCU campuses will be invited to participate.

The California Students Vote Project acknowledges that each system caters to a wide range of campuses with diverse needs. Each system has a different academic calendar and significant variations of semesters and quarters length. With this in mind, each college will be encouraged to kick off the challenge during the first week of instruction.

*Note: Not all Community College Districts, UCs, and CSUs have the same first day of instruction. Please see Section VII for the Ballot Bowl timeline.

II. Duration of Competition

An essential factor to take into account is the amount of time the campuses will have to prepare for the competition. All campuses and student vote leads will receive a notification of the Ballot Bowl by the California Secretary of State in February 2020. The notification will serve as an opportunity to introduce the Ballot Bowl in further detail and share our vision of the challenge with campus officials, partners, and students. The notification will also serve as an opportunity to answer questions regarding the Ballot Bowl. In August the Secretary of State will send out instructions, a registration link, and a timeline of the Ballot Bowl. During this time, we will also send the California Students Vote Project tool kit and other Ballot Bowl materials including draft social media and signage, to all registered campuses. Lastly, we will announce the public kick-off of the Ballot Bowl in August.

The challenge will begin on August 17, 2020 and will end on Election Day, November 3rd, 2020. The California Secretary of State will count the number of online voter registrations and completed voter registration cards received during the expected timeline of the challenge. The goal is to remain competitive within a reasonable time frame and capture the momentum leading up to the election to prevent a loss of interest amongst students. For the 2020 General Election, a new challenge has been introduced: to conditionally register the largest number of students, at an on-campus

polling location or vote center. Because this year's competition will include conditional voter registration, which continues past the E-15 deadline, we are extending the time frame for the Ballot Bowl competition, allowing campuses who have an on-campus polling location or vote center to remain competitive as Election Day approaches.

III. Awards

*Awards: To Be Determined

Awards will be given to one campus in each system of education based on each of the following criteria:

- The campus with the largest number of students registered.
- The campus with the largest percentage of its student body registered.
- The campus with the most creative approach to registering students.
- The campus with the largest number of students registered at an on-campus polling location or vote center.

Four awards will be presented to the CCC, CSU, UC, and AICCU systems, for a total of sixteen awards. In the spirit of camaraderie, each campus will be able to win only one prize. In addition to the award, the Secretary of State will present a resolution to the administration of the winning campuses acknowledging their support and efforts in the competition.

IV. Resources

The Secretary of State will provide a toolkit, fact sheet, sample social media, a template to report voter registration plans, and additional support by publicizing the challenge and encouraging students to participate.

Because this challenge extends across all college and university systems, it will require the engagement of the campus community as a whole. Student leaders and/or student government bodies should involve the different student communities (i.e. Transfer Center, Cultural Centers, and Greek Council) on their campuses to best use their skill sets through a direct engagement campaign. Campuses should be encouraged to use their creativity when participating in the challenge. Standard methods can include but should not be limited to setting up registration tables on campus, coordinating with resident assistants or advisors (RAs) to encourage voter registration during orientation and move-in, sending campus-wide emails, posting voter registration messaging on the course management website, organizing rallies and events, and collaborating with student civic engagement leaders. Ultimately colleges and universities know the needs of their respective campuses best and thus have the power to decide how they will creatively participate in the challenge.

V. Impact of Challenge

Goals for the challenge are to increase student voter registration and to create meaningful experiences that will continue to foster an interest in the election process. This challenge also seeks to further establish a strong relationship between the Secretary of State, the Lieutenant Governor, and California's higher education systems.

VI. Tracking of Campus Challenge

The Secretary of State will keep track of voter registration progress and continue to work to meet students' needs for their participation in the Ballot Bowl challenge. Each campus will oversee tracking the number of students registered to vote on an on-campus polling location or vote center.

VII. Timeline

Ballot Bowl Timeline (Tentative)

March 2020: Notify all campuses and student vote leads about the Ballot Bowl

August 2020: Campus deadline to register for Ballot Bowl.

- Secretary of State sends out tool kit and other Ballot Bowl materials (including draft social media/signage) to all registered campuses.

August 17, 2020: Ballot Bowl challenge begins

October 23, 2020: Voter registration deadline

November 3, 2020: Election Day / Ballot Bowl challenge ends

November 16, 2020: Campus winners announced.

California State University, Chico

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