

# Promoting Voter and Civic Engagement at Your Library



# Today's Presenters



**Kian Flynn**

Geography & Global Studies Librarian, University of Washington, Chair of ALA's Government Document Round Table (GODORT)



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**Who I Am**



**Kian Flynn**

**Geography & Global Studies Librarian**

**University of Washington Libraries, Seattle, WA**

**Chair of ALA's Government Documents Round Table (GODORT)**





# Work Related to Voter & Civic Engagement at the Library

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#huskiesvote

## Democracy Dawgs

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON



## “The Problem”



**Voter Turnout in U.S. Elections  
(Percentage of Voting-Eligible Population)**

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

## “The Problem”



Nearly **half** of the voting eligible population did not vote in the last midterm election

**One-third** of the voting eligible population did not vote in the last general election

## “The Problem”

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Age: 18-24

**27.6%**

Age: 65-74

**68.0%**

**Voter Turnout in 2022 U.S. Midterm Election  
(Percentage of Voting-Eligible Population)**

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

## “The Problem”



Under \$10k

**28.6%**

Over \$150k

**68.3%**

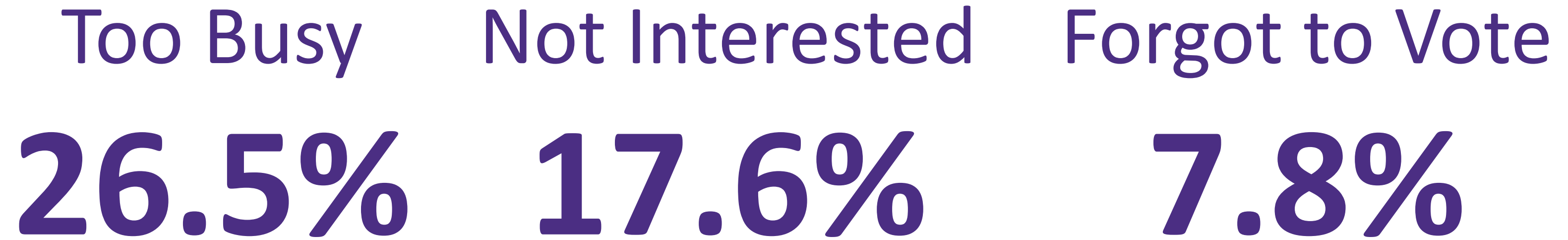
**Voter Turnout by Family Income in 2022 U.S. Midterm Election  
(Percentage of Voting-Eligible Population)**

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*



## “The Problem”

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**Reasons for Not Voting in 2022 U.S. Midterm Election  
(Percentage of Voting-Eligible Population)**

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

## “The Problem”



2016	2018	2020	2022
<b>14.3%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>

**Reason for Not Voting: “Too Busy”  
(Percentage of Those Not Voting in Given Election)**

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

# University of Washington's Democracy Dawgs

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**#huskiesvote**

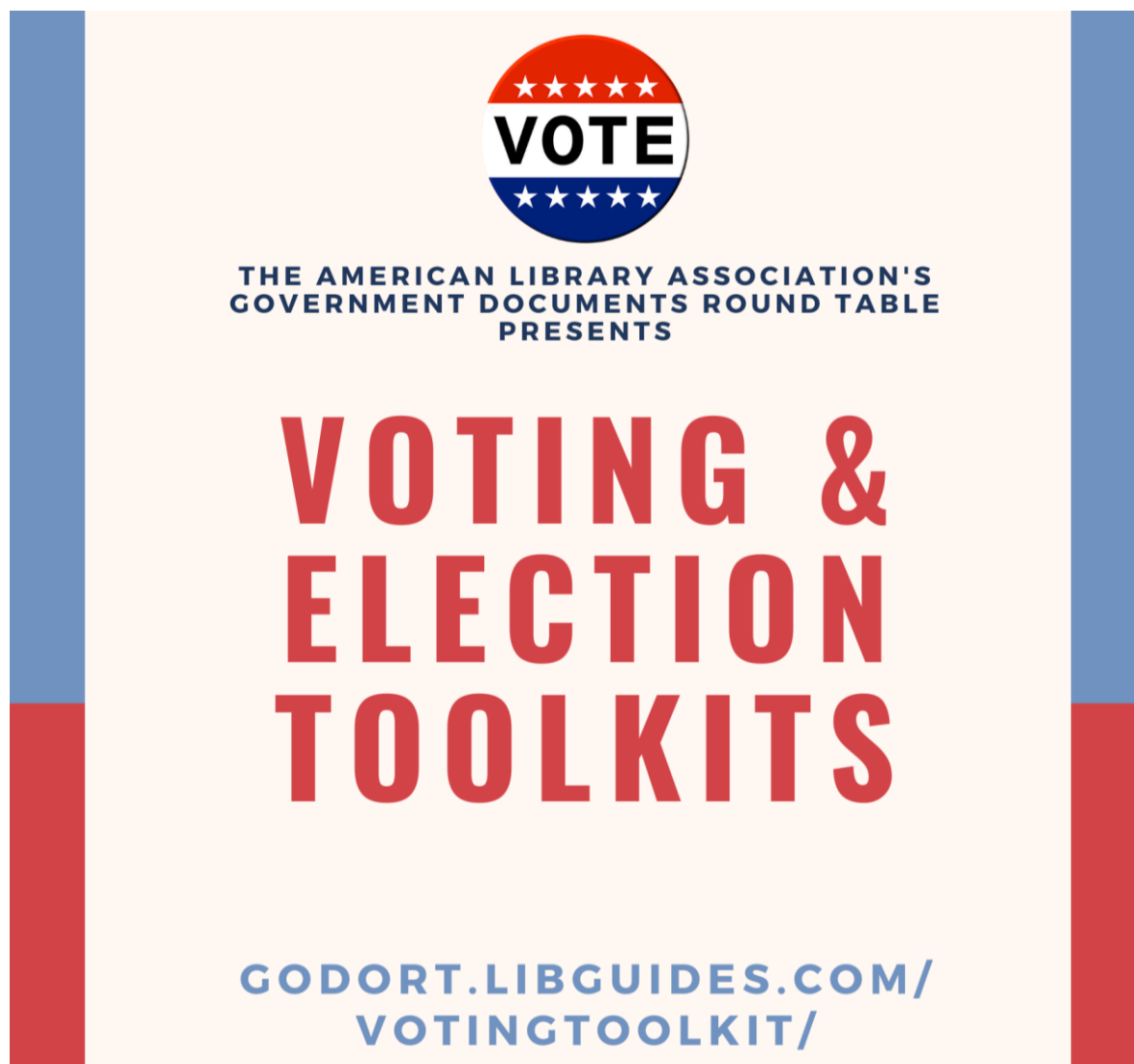
- **Our Need**
- **Our Coalition**
- **Our Events**
- **Our Goals**

## Democracy Dawgs

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# GODORT's Voting & Election Toolkits

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- **The Idea**
- **The Resource**
- **The Upkeep**

# GODORT Emerging Leaders – Class of 2023



**Project:** Library Communities Vote

**Tasked With:** Create a template that can be modified to fit individual library needs and provide relevant and accurate information about voter registration and voting for their community members.

**Sponsored By:** GODORT and SRRT (Social Responsibilities Round Table)



# The Washington Post

## College students have been voting at record rates. Why?

Whether they show up for the November 2022 elections may depend on what colleges do

In the 2020 election, 66 percent of college students who were registered to vote cast their ballots — **an increase of 14 percentage points over the 2016 presidential election**. Similarly, in the 2018 midterms, **college student voter turnout doubled** from 19 percent in 2014 to 40 percent.

What happened? ... **(S)ome of the increase is likely due to get-out-the-vote initiatives conducted in colleges across the country. Stronger student turnout strengthens democracy and increases the likelihood that policymakers will pay attention to issues important to students, like student debt.**

## Stay Connected



**Kian Flynn**

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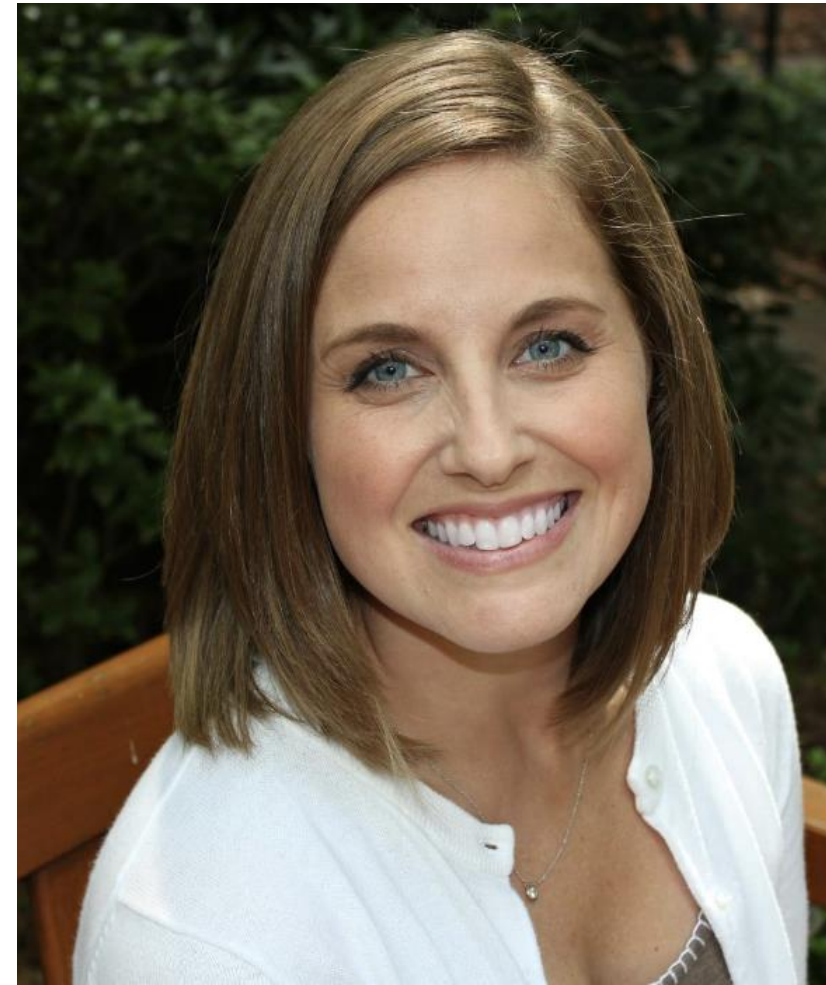
UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

# Who We Are and What We Do

**Lynda Reynolds**  
Acting Director  
Library  
Development,  
Public Library  
Management  
Consultant



**Lauren Clossey**  
Continuing  
Education  
Consultant

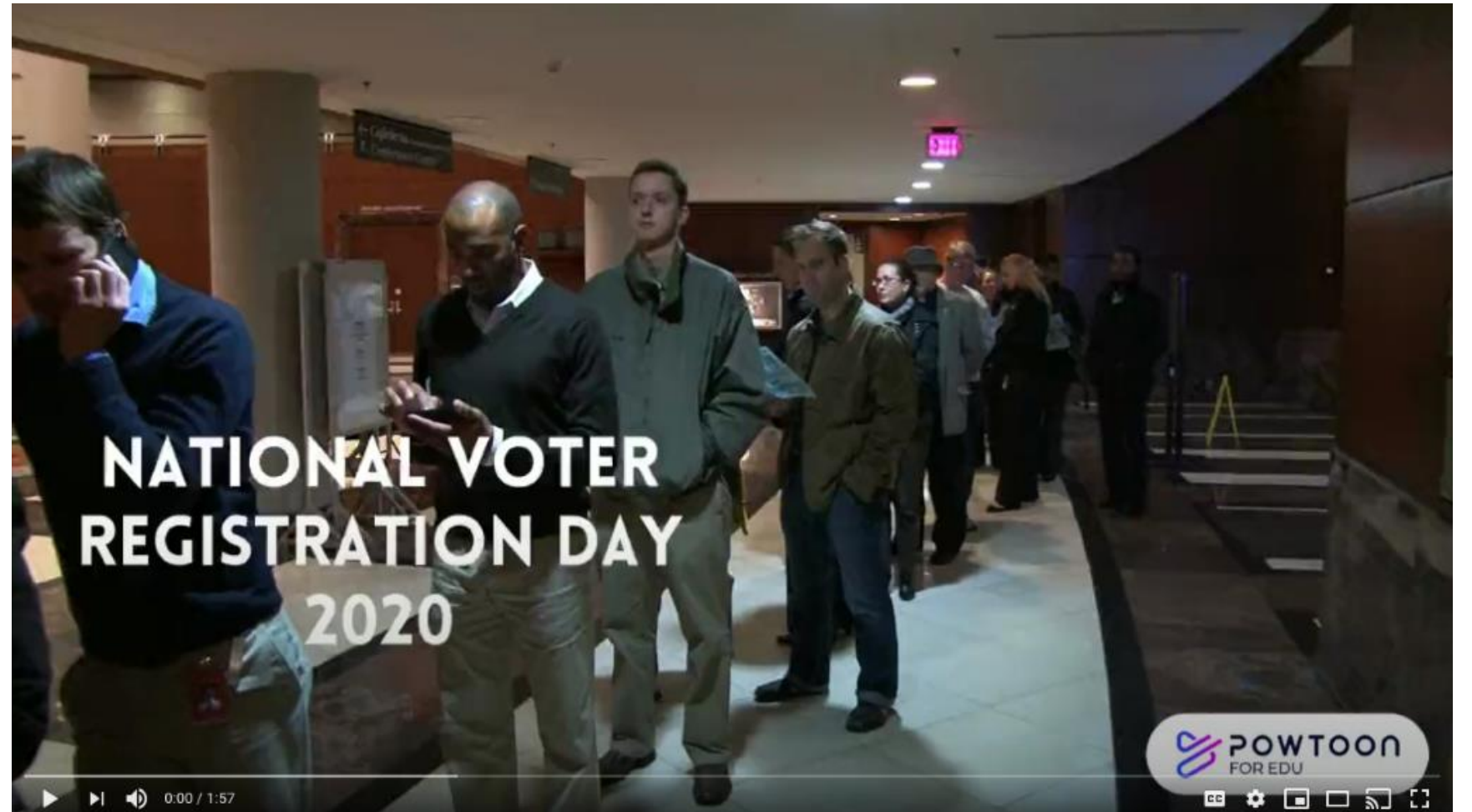


The **Library Development** section helps North Carolina Libraries serve their communities by providing consulting services, supporting continuing education opportunities, and administering grant programs and Aid to Public Libraries fund.



# State Library of North Carolina NVRD Initiative

- [NVRD Toolkit](#)
- Promotional video
- ALA tracked registrations
- Connecting with libraries
- Follow up surveys



<https://bit.ly/NVRDvideo>

# NVRD Toolkit Website

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## National Voter Registration Day Toolkit

<b>About</b>	How to Participate	Voter Registration Drive
North Carolina Voting Resources	Other Resources	Event Kick-off

["Celebrate NVRD @ Your Library" PLA podcast with SLNC staff](#)

National Voter Registration Day is a nonpartisan civic holiday celebrating our democracy. First observed in 2012, it has quickly gained momentum ever since. Nearly 4.5 million voters have registered to vote on the holiday to date.

National Voter Registration Day will next take place on September 19, 2023, when volunteers and organizations from all over the country will “hit the streets” in a single day of coordinated field, technology and media efforts. National Voter Registration Day seeks to create broad awareness of voter registration opportunities to reach tens of thousands of voters who may not register otherwise.



# More NVRD Resources

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## NVRD Resources for Organizers

[NVRD Toolkit](#)

[Resources for involving students](#)

## Protocol for collecting NC Voter Registration forms:

- Before hosting a registration drive, contact your local board of elections (BOE) to determine how they would like the forms to be handled. In some cases, the BOE will send a representative to your drive to collection the registration forms.
- Check [here](#) for information on your county BOE.
- All voter registration forms—complete and incomplete—must be sent to the county BOE in which the voter resides. Please also return unused forms if they are no longer needed to the county board of elections office or the State Board of Elections.
- Submit completed voter registration forms within 5 business days of receipt but no later than the 25th day before an election.
- If unable to determine the county board of elections, forms may be mailed to or dropped off at the State Board of Elections:

# North Carolina Voter Engagement Resources

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Library Development has curated the following voter engagement resources specific for North Carolina:

## **NC State Board of Election resources:**

- [NC State Board of Election homepage](#)
- [How to register](#)
- [Absentee voting process](#)
- [Upcoming Election and Voter Registration Deadlines](#)

## **Voting Guides:**

- [North Carolina Voter Guide](#)
- [Voting Answers](#)

## **County election information:**

- [BallotReady.org](#)

## **Disability Voting Rights North Carolina resources:**

- [Access the Vote NC](#)
- [Vote for Access videos](#)

## **Resources for Persons in the Criminal Justice System:**

- [Registering as a person in the criminal justice system](#)
- [Know Your Voting Rights](#)



# Our Results

104 North Carolina libraries registered since 2020 including public, community college and academic libraries

250+ voters registered or updated registration (that's just those reported to us)

North Carolina listed in top 5 states for 2020 NVRD partners

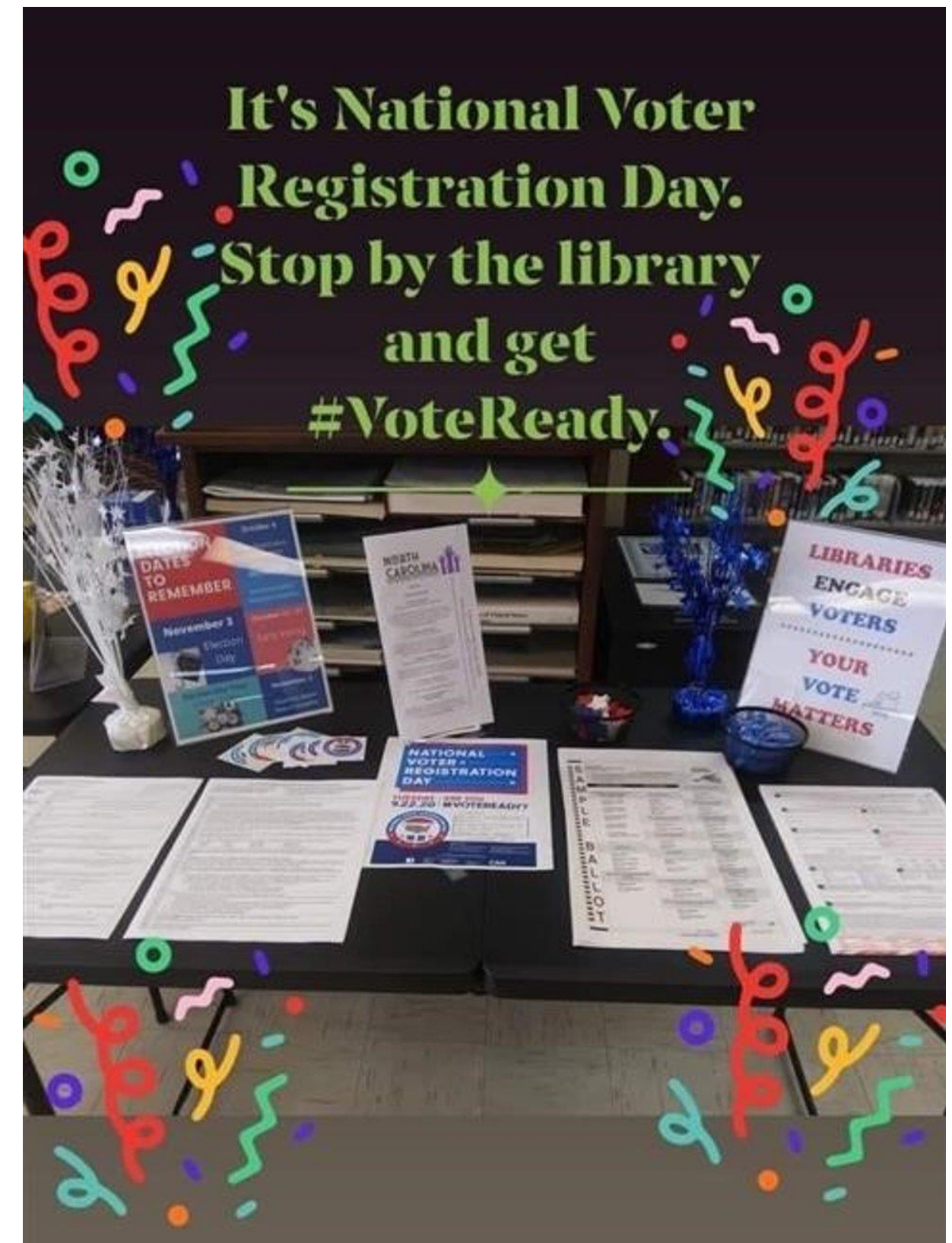


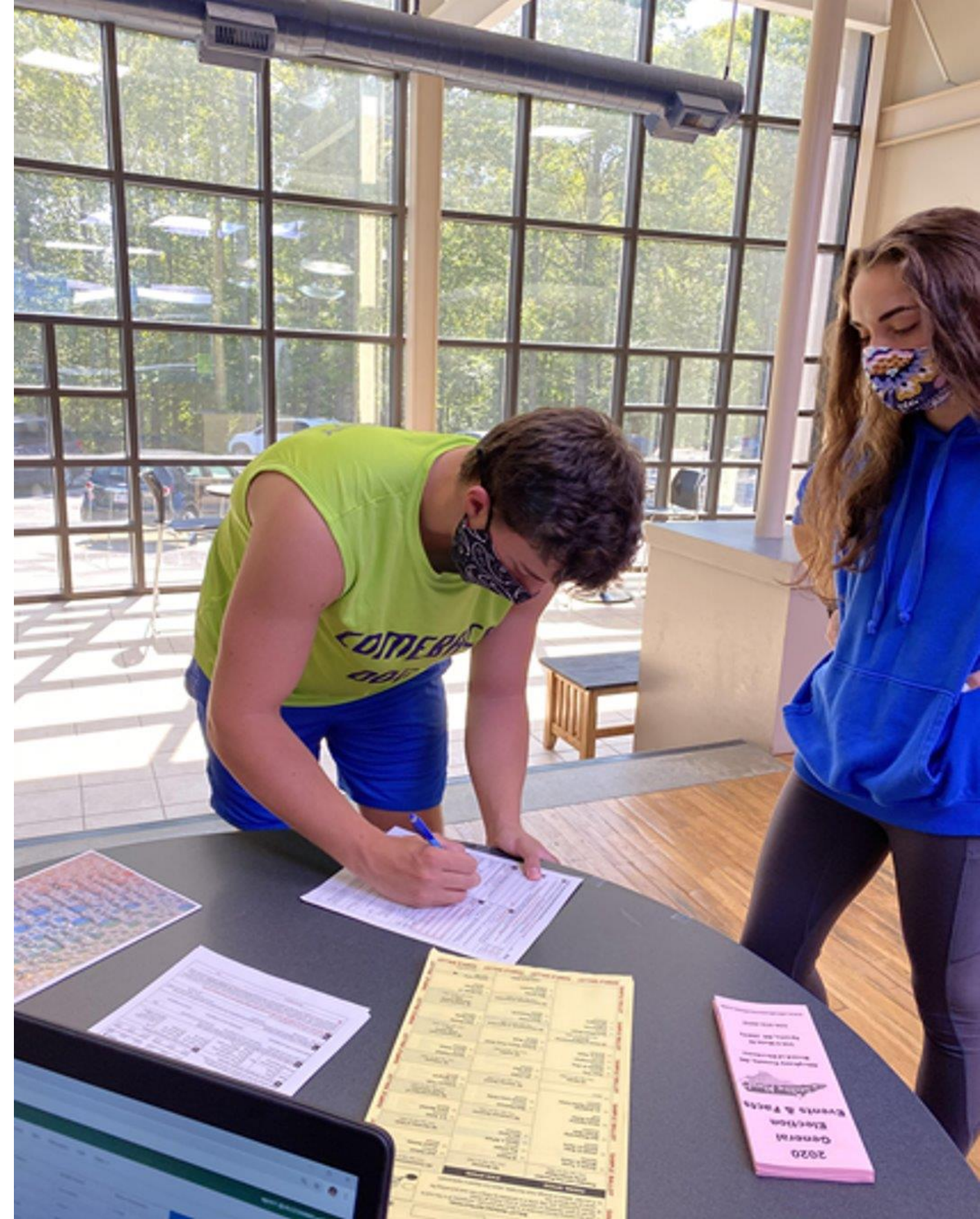
Photo courtesy of Hertford County Library (Albemarle Regional Library System)



# Library Success Stories

- First-time voters
- Library creativity
- Engagement opportunities
- Forging partnerships

Wilkes Community College NVRD registration.  
Photo courtesy of Northwestern Regional Library System





# Key Takeaways

NVRD swag

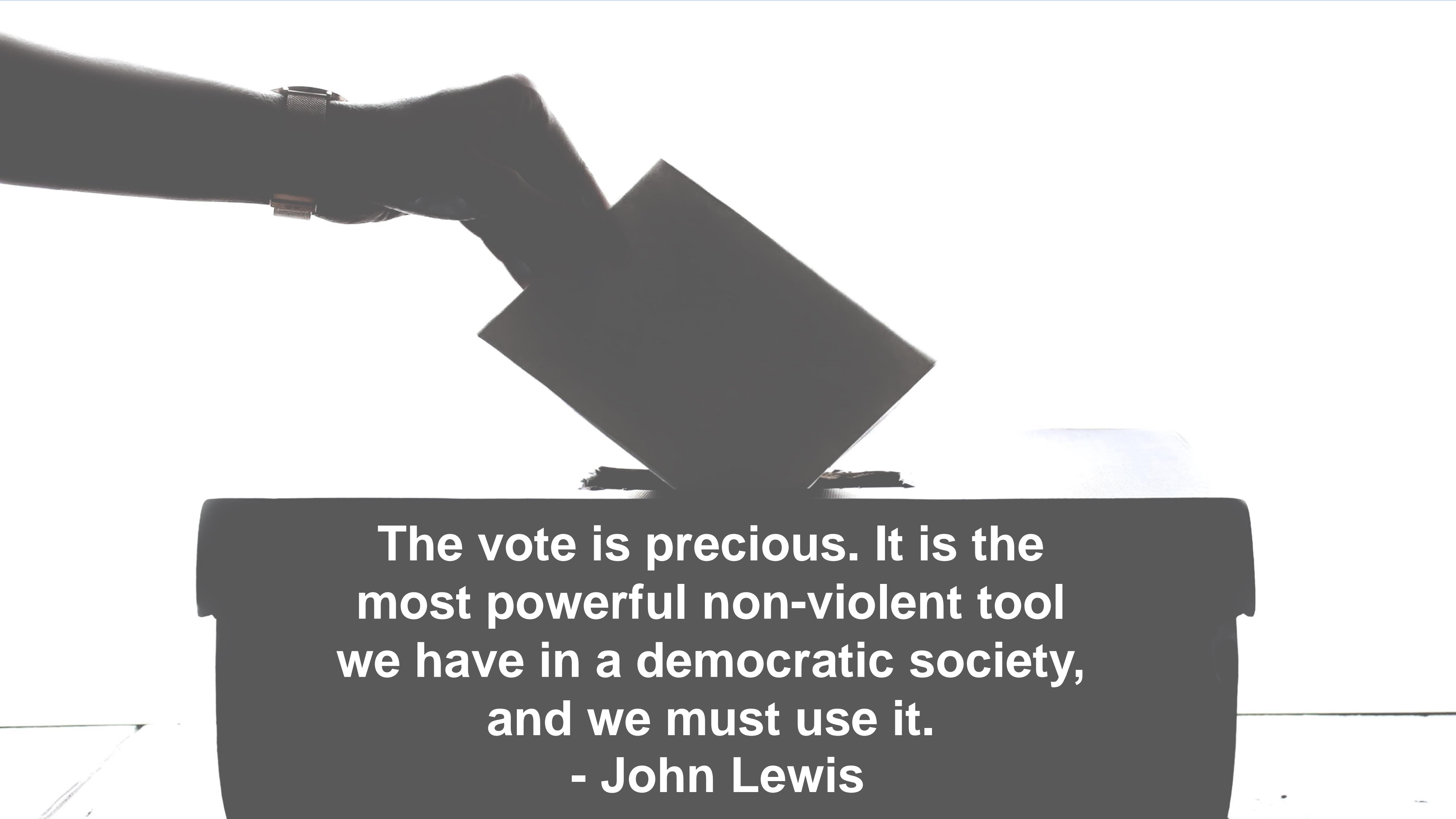
Local and state resources

Information overload

Encourage partnerships





A high-contrast, black and white photograph showing a hand holding a ballot box. The hand is positioned at the top left, with a watch visible on the wrist. The ballot box is a dark, rectangular object with a lid that is slightly ajar. The background is a bright, overexposed white, creating a stark silhouette effect. The overall composition is simple and focused on the act of holding the ballot box.

**The vote is precious. It is the  
most powerful non-violent tool  
we have in a democratic society,  
and we must use it.**

**- John Lewis**

# STAY CONNECTED

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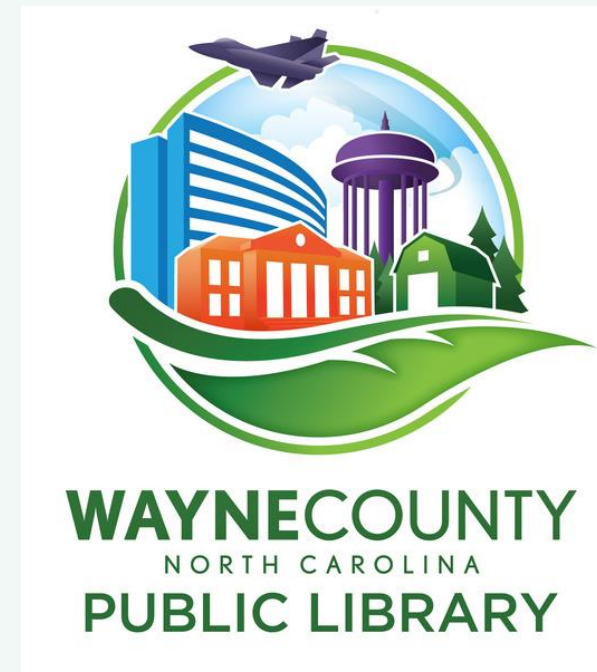
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IN VRD AT  
WAYNE  
COUNTY  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY



Anna Snyder, Head of Reference

# OVERVIEW

- Becoming involved with NVRD through the State Library of NC
- Outreach
- Lessons learned
- Plans for the future



Photo credit: Anna Snyder



# IN THE BEGINNING

- State Library of NC launched an initiative in 2020 to get public libraries to promote and celebrate NVRD
- NC voting rules are confusing....plus COVID
- Libraries are the perfect place to encourage and participate in civic life



Photo credit: Anna Snyder



NVRD\_Sample\_Social\_Media



# PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

- COVID, obviously, impacted everything
- Partnerships with local organizations
- Publicizing event through normal library channels



Photo credit: Anna Snyder

Person minding their own business & not thinking about voting: exists  
Us:



imgflip.com







# WHY IS THIS WORK IMPORTANT?

- Personal and political interests of the public
- Civic engagement is your way to advocate for yourself!
- Local elections are critically important
- Libraries vs. misinformation

The best thing  
about **democracy?**

**Each day** is a new  
chance to **grow**  
**and strengthen it**



**In 2017, 60% of  
unregistered  
voters say they  
were never  
asked to register**



[NVRD Sample Social Media](#)

# LESSONS LEARNED

- Consider local partners
- Many people don't know their polling location
- Consider alternate location
- Consider civics-related programming and displays leading up to NVRD for more traction/visibility



# QUESTIONS, THOUGHTS, MEMES?

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imgflip.com

[NVRD Sample Social Media](#)



# Q&A



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