REPORT OF THE 2012 MICHIGAN STUDENT POLITICAL ISSUES CONVENTION

The 2012 Michigan Student Political Issues Convention had 771 students register and participate on Friday October 12, 2012. Students and faculty from the following institutions participated:

- Henry Ford Community College,
- Oakland Community College - Auburn Hills,
- Oakland Community College - Royal Oak,
- Macomb Community College,
- Monroe Community College,
- University of Michigan-Dearborn,
- Schoolcraft College
- Wayne State University

The Michigan Agenda included the following 7 issues. (A complete list of the 51 issues receiving votes is attached).

MICHIGAN STUDENT POLITICAL AGENDA
1. Healthcare
2. Unemployment
3. Gay Marriage and Adoption Rights and Employment Rights
4. Economy and Poverty
5. Higher Education and Higher Education Cost and Transparency
6. Education/Financial Aid
7. Infrastructure

The students in attendance request that political leaders consider these issues when they set their legislative priorities. They urge these political leaders to take these concerns seriously and find ways to meaningfully attend to these issues.

Overview of the 2012 Convention:

The opening session convened in the Forfa Auditorium at Henry Ford Community College at 9:30 am. Dr. Anthony Perry chaired the opening session. Congressmen John Dingell was awarded the first Lifetime Public Service Award from the Henry Ford Community College Democracy Institute. Dr. Henry Bowers was awarded the first Lifetime Civic Education Award.

Debbie Dingell provided the keynote, delivering an address that focused on the importance of public service and being engaged politically. She spoke about her life and the barriers she overcame to serve the public and to challenge injustices. She told the audience about her upbringing and how her early education provided her with the moral compass to speak truth to power and to devote her life to public service.
Mary Bugeia, the League of Women Voters-DDH provided brief remarks on the importance of civic participation including voting.

A Panel of Elected Officials including: Southfield Mayor Brenda Lawrence, Melvindale Mayor Stacy Striz, Michigan Representative Gail Haines, Shannelle Jackson, and Dain Slavens and Debbie Dingell participated in a discussion on women in electoral politics including the challenges and opportunities presented them.

A series of concurrent issue workshops helped students explore issues in greater detail (see attached program for list of workshops). Students led several of the workshop discussions. Workshops had students engage the workshop leaders and others through debate and discussions.

After these workshops students voted on the issues they felt were in the most need of governmental attention and the issues were reported out at the final session in the Forfa Auditorium.

The final plenary session had a panel of elected officials including: Michigan State Senators Morris Hood and Senator Hoon-Yung Hopgood and Michigan State Representatives George Darany, and Phil Cavanagh responded to the students’ agenda. The panel addressed questions from students in the audience.

After the panel discussion, Lt. Governor Brian Calley spoke about the proposed International Bridge to Canada and Proposal 6 on the November Ballot as well as discussion on the importance of being engaged citizens. The Lt. Governor took questions from the students.

Concluding, Mr. George Cushingberry, retired State Legislator provided an overview response to the agenda and the students’ work and called students to become more engaged in the political process.
Other Issues Receiving Votes: In order of Votes received

- K-12 Education/Budget Cuts
- Freeze Tuition
- Equal Employment Rights for Gays
- Protection of Women Reproductive Rights
- Citizens United
- Income Taxes
- Nuclear Power
- Drug Testing for Welfare
- Financial Aid
- Food and Drug Regulation
- War on Drugs
- Ending Foreign Aid
- Foreign Policy
- Sex in schools
- Pell Grant
- Women in Direct Ground Combat
- Federal Reserve
- Legalization of Marijuana
- Crime
- Real Education for Jobs
- Welfare System
- Immigration Reform
- Gun Control
- Chinese Human Rights
- Globalization
- Expanding Military Funding
- Teacher's Tenure
- Domestic Violence
- Proposal 6
- Capital Punishment
- Religion and Conflict
- Protect the Bill of Rights
- Raise the Minimum Wage
- Quantitative Easing
- Women's Rights
- Urban v. Suburban Education
- Affirmative Action
- Public Transportation and Mass Transit
- Women in Politics
- Women's Equality in Pay
- Equal Adoption Rights
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