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Princeton Votes 2005 Launches Voter Registration and Education Campaign

Princeton University – September 27, 2005 – This month, as freshmen moved in to begin their new lives as Princeton undergraduates, they were immediately greeted by a new University political organization. Princeton Votes, a non-partisan, student-led initiative designed to promote civic engagement, staffed voter registration tables at various campus events during Freshman Orientation and throughout September. P-Votes’ mission is to facilitate student voter registration, either in students’ home states or in New Jersey; to encourage students to update outdated voter registrations; and to educate students about local, state, and national issues relevant to voting decisions.

P-Votes was founded in 2004 as a concerted voter-registration effort by the presidents of the College Democrats and College Republicans in partnership with the Undergraduate Student Government and various political organizations. Originally envisioned as a short-term initiative to encourage student activism in the 2004 Presidential election, the organization’s overwhelming success in registering 1300 students in 2004 prompted a decision to reorganize and commit to making more long-term impressions on the local and state political landscapes. The purpose behind Princeton Votes 2005 is to use the momentum from 2004 to continue to empower students to be engaged and involved in their government and to remind them of their ongoing civic duties. According to Co-chair Evan Magruder “Voting for the presidency every four years is a step towards greater civic responsibility; however, voting in local elections is equally important, as it contributes to a greater sense of civic responsibility within one’s own community.” In September alone, P-Votes registered 210 new student voters and received 47 updated registrations. However, P-Votes leaders are quick to point out the potential for hundreds more updated registrations from students registered in New Jersey who have changed campus addresses since last year. “Princeton University voters should keep in mind the need to fill out a quick ‘change of address’ registration, available from P-Votes, necessary due to changes in dormitory from year to year,” Magruder said.

Princeton Votes 2005 will continue to work registering voters until the October 11th registration deadline, and its volunteers will work on voter education until the general elections on November 8th. On October 7th the organization will host New Jersey 101, an introduction to New Jersey politics featuring presentations from state and local experts and officials.

More information about P-Votes is available on the organization’s website, www.princeton.edu/~pvotes.

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