

Civil Dialogue: Talking With Friends, Family and Neighbors

Hi Fellows, my name is Ella Lawson and I was a CEEP Fellow at the University of Mississippi. My favorite part of the Fellowship was talking to new people. I met so many students, faculty, and community members who changed my perspective, not just about voting but also about the state as a whole. Thanks to CEEP's nonpartisanship, I was able to talk with individuals all across the political spectrum and have meaningful conversations about the issues they cared about. I've created this document to help you find ways to start those conversations. You've got this!



Large-scale events and institutional projects are key components of voter engagement, but civil dialogue can be just as impactful. Personal discussions often change people's minds on the importance and necessity of voting. Here, we're going to walk through three types of one-on-one conversations: with friends and family, on social media and through canvassing.

Friends and Family

- **You're full of knowledge and insights about voting**, so use your passion to impact those closest to you. By having conversations with friends and family, you can encourage them to become civically engaged. Simply start by asking if they're registered to vote.
- **Let your friends and family know that you're there to help them through the voting process** if they need anything. You can offer to help them with the registration process, give them [nonpartisan candidate guides](#) or drive them to the polls.
- **Reach out virtually to friends and family** through text chains and phone banks. These quick messages and reminders can turn into larger conversations about voting.

Social Media

- **Social media is all about building relationships**, so make sure that both your voter engagement social media campaign and your personal account are open to having one-on-one conversations. Encourage your followers to DM you with questions about voting. When people message you, be friendly and helpful. Follow up later to make sure everything turned out all right and send personal reminders to vote.

CAMPUS ELECTION ENGAGEMENT PROJECT FELLOW

- **Be sure to take advantage of your specific social media platform.** On Instagram, you can use interactive stories to answer frequently asked voting-related questions. You could also host an Instagram live Q&A session on your state's voting rules and procedures. On Twitter, you can start conversations with threads. Check out CEEP's social media accounts for ideas and inspiration.

Canvassing

- **Canvassing involves going door-to-door** and providing residents with voter registration forms, nonpartisan candidate guides and other resources. It's a great way to get involved in the community and reach out to individuals who don't normally participate in voter engagement events.
- When canvassing, it's important to **be prepared with clipboards, voter registration forms, pens, and other resources.** It's also key to train volunteers thoroughly prior to canvassing and to send them out in groups of two or three. Emphasize safety and make sure each group is able to contact you at any point during the event.
- On campus, you can **host a [dorm storm](#) to register students and get out the vote.**