

Voting and the Democratic Process Study Report



Program Goals

1. Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate voter education tools to voter outreach groups prior to the 2012 elections.
2. Reach an estimated 6,000 New Americans with voter engagement information including what is required to vote, what you vote for (candidates and issues), and sharing other ways to get involved and have your voice heard.
3. Measure the impact of ECHO's multicultural TV/DVD program and ELL Curriculum.

Program Highlights

Developed Educational TV Program

A 30 minute educational TV/DVD program was developed in four languages including Basic English, Spanish, Hmong, and Somali with content developed by voting subject matter experts including the League of Women Voters, Take Action Minnesota, and the Secretary of State's Office.

The ECHO TV program **reached more than 88,000 English, Spanish, Hmong, and Somali community members** statewide through Twin Cities Public Television.



Teaching ELL Students

An English Language Learning (ELL) "Voter Unit" Curriculum was developed in partnership with the Minnesota Literacy Council based off the content developed for the program. The curriculum featured segments of the English video as part of the week-long classroom lesson and a variety of discussion activities.

The ELL curriculum was piloted in seven classrooms to an estimated 50 students. The students were given pre- and post- surveys to evaluate their learning.

- On average, participants overall test scores **increased by 28%** after viewing the ECHO program.
- After watching the video, correct answers for the question of "how do you register to vote?" **increased by 23%**.
- After watching the video, correct answers for the question of "how do you find out where to vote?" **increased by 26%**.

Project Funders:



MARBROOK FOUNDATION



Community and Staff Testimonials

I can help someone else to vote. I can interpret. I can volunteer and campaign.
-Latino Resident, Willmar

When I told a Latina woman in Willmar who could not vote that she can still support candidates that advocate for the Latino community by telling her friends about these candidates and making sure if her friends have the right to vote, they use that right. She became animated and said, "Yes, this is our responsibility!"
- ECHO Staff Member

I can help people protest or campaign, and I can help someone who needs interpreter or driver.
-Latino Resident, Willmar

(over)

Voting and the Democratic Process Study Report (pg 2)



ECHO Core Programs:

Health and Safety Education

These programs present foundational information in a culturally relevant and accessible way to motivate behavior change.

Civic Engagement and Self Sufficiency

These programs empower LEPs by going beyond basic health and safety needs and increasing self-sufficiency.

Community Outreach and Engagement

ECHO partners with people and organizations to discuss community challenges and find ways to address them that are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Emergency Response and Preparedness

ECHO maintains an emergency communication infrastructure so when needed, critical information can be delivered to LEP communities statewide.

Training and Research

ECHO offers cultural competency training, community surveying, risk assessment, and focus group services to those trying to better reach and serve LEP and ELL community members.

Community Outreach and Voter Education

ECHO participated in a myriad of voting outreach events including holding several program screening events followed by a conversation about voting. Events included:

- Ridgewater College, Willmar, Minn., with Latino Youth and Parents. Spanish video was presented.
- Skyline Apartments, St. Paul, Minn., with Elderly Limited English Speaking Residents. Basic English video presented through interpreters.
- Eden Prairie Senior Center with Somali Women’s Group. Somali video was presented.

More about Ridgewater College Event in Willmar, Minnesota:

29 Latinos participated in the survey which was offered in English or Spanish with an interpreter to answer questions.

- Many viewers appreciated having the program in Spanish, and that it featured members from their own communities.
- Based on survey scores before and after viewing the program, there was a substantially **increased awareness of (1) how to register to vote and (2) how to find out where to vote.**
- Many viewers commented on the need for education on the important topics of voting and being involved in their community in their language.
- Many viewers expressed their desire to make their voice heard, carry out their duty, and help educate others on the importance of being engaged in the democratic process.
- After viewing, of those NOT eligible to vote, **59% said they are planning to get involved or voice their opinion in some other way.**



ECHO also distributed DVDs at a multitude of events including the CAPI Candidate Forum, a Parkway “Voter ID” Video Screening, and a St. Cloud Latino voter outreach event held at the library. **Over 170 organizations helped ECHO distribute 3,000 educational DVDs statewide.** A complete distribution map is available upon request.

ECHO also purchased advertisements and earned publicity in local ethnic and mainstream media including:



- Online, print, and on the radio with Latino Communications Network (LCN).
- A banner on Mshale, a popular Somali website.
- An article and advertisement in the Hmong Times newspaper.
- A panel discussion on WCCO Radio.
- An article on the Midwest Solidarity Movement website.
- An article on the Minnesota Literacy Council’s blog.