



HELEN X. SAMPSON FOUNDATION AWARDS

The **Helen X. Sampson Fund** was created to support special Women's Studies projects. Helen X. Sampson was a pioneer advocate for Women's Studies and the goals of the women's movement both on the UW-Eau Claire campus and in the state of Wisconsin. The annual March awards keep Helen Sampson's name and spirit alive. There are 3 awards given from this fund. They are:

- **Undergraduate Research Papers:** A minimum of five pages using primary or secondary sources.
- **Undergraduate Project:** Can include but not limited to literary works, original artwork, software, videos, musical performances or compositions.
- **Graduate Category:** May be projects or papers (15 typed pages minimum). Primary sources (documents, statistical data, or interviews) are utilized in an original project prepared for an independent study or a graduate seminar and demonstrating a professional level of execution.

SPECIAL AWARDS

(Both Graduate And Undergraduate Work are Eligible for the following five awards)

- **Virgiline and Joseph See Award:** For an outstanding **poetry** submission by a male or female first-generation student who knows the risk it takes to call oneself a poet.
- **Tillie Olsen Award:** For an outstanding **fiction or creative non-fiction** submission by a male or female student whose work explores **progressive gender relationships**.

Note: Both of the above awards are available for students whose submissions were written for a course or on their own. Faculty nomination is required.

- **Mary Catherine and Caroline Kessler Award:** For an outstanding research paper or project in **history**.
- **Donna C. Turell Award:** For an outstanding paper/project related to **the application of women's studies** to one's life.
- **Cecelia M. Belter Award:** Recognizes outstanding **service** by an undergraduate student to **promote women's issues** to the University or Chippewa Valley community. This work can be done through, but is not limited to: class project, service learning, program development, or student organization activities.

Nomination Criteria

- 1.) You may nomination as many student projects/papers as you wish. Please use discretion in the number you nominate, and only submit those papers/projects that you believe are outstanding and worthy of an award.
- 2.) Nominations will be screened to assure minimum standards of achievement for all entries recognized at the event.
- 3.) Nominations should include a gendered analysis/women's studies focus.
- 4.) Completeness of Entries--Each entry must include a faculty statement or recommendation and all pertinent attachments before submission to the judge's panel. *Please be sure that if you don't attach the student's work, that they submit it by the deadline.*



University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

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January 28, 2005

Women's Studies Awards Committee:

In my career I have often worked with or advised students who were leading remarkable projects outside of the classroom that benefited women in our community. There are very few ways to recognize that work, so last year I contributed money for the creation of the Cecelia M. Belter Award for Outstanding Service to recognize a UW-Eau Claire female student who was conducting excellent service work on our campus and in our community. When the call for nominations came out this year, I instantly thought of Ms. Lindsey Nelson and the outstanding work that she has done. As such, I respectfully submit this letter nominating Ms. Lindsey Nelson for the Cecelia M. Belter Award.

Lindsey has served our campus in many ways during her the four years she as a student. While I am specifically nominating her for her work with the New Voters Project, Lindsey has contributed to our campus as the President of the United Hall Council, Chair of the Wisconsin United Residence Hall Association Regional Conference, Resident Assistant, Lead Housing Specialist, and Public Relations Chair of Student Senate. For her many leadership skills she was recognized as one of 16 students from Wisconsin colleges to be selected as a 2004-05 Student Civic Leadership Fellow by Wisconsin Campus Compact and the Upper Midwest Campus Compact Consortium.

When Lindsey received this honor she was quoted: "As I read about student civic engagement, I felt as though my small attempts to reach out weren't so small, and more importantly, that those attempts can become even more powerful and substantive. The power of service-learning can inspire hope and motivation to make abundant changes within our society. In a hopeful, rather than a naïve sense, that power makes the expectations of making significant changes in this world a little less impossible."

These comments give some insight into her goals for her work in the Fall of 2004 when she served as the coordinator of the UW-Eau Claire New Voters project. This outstanding project helped to register and inform thousands of UW-Eau Claire students about the voting process. Lindsey was especially concerned about getting women to participate in the election process. Her hard work produced outstanding results for our campus. The packet of information attached clearly illustrates the amount of work that went into mobilizing the college student vote on our campus. It also outlines the fruits of that labor.

One remarkable characteristic about Lindsey's leadership on this project (and actually in all that she does) is her ability to engage and inspire her peers to action. I am constantly amazed at her ability to take on a project and instantly motivate other interested students, and some uninterested students as well, to work hard to advance whatever the cause may be. She has

Excellence. Our measure, our motto, our goal.

done this over and over again in her four years at UW-Eau Claire. A few examples of her success are: the late night bus project, hunger awareness week, bidding for and then hosting the WURHA conference in Eau Claire, reducing smoking near residence halls, and now convincing students to register and vote. Many people will take on a cause and work diligently to advance that cause. That is not enough for Lindsey. She wants to inspire others to make a difference, too. She does this in all that she does and UW-Eau Claire is a better place because she has helped her peers to maximize their own potential.

It is my sincere hope that you will carefully consider Lindsey's nomination for the Cecelia M. Belter award. Her drive to improve our world, ability to motivate others, and willingness to give of herself are all qualities that make her an outstanding candidate for this award. Please feel free to contact me at thesinjm@uwec.edu or 715-836-2325 to further discuss her many qualifications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jodi M. Thesing-Ritter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jodi M. Thesing-Ritter
Associate Dean of Student Development

Lindsey Nelson
Scholarship Summary Packet

The New Voters Project (NVP) is a non-partisan, grassroots campaign dedicated to increase voter turnout among 18-24 year olds. The purpose of the New Voters Project was to mobilize 18-24 year olds to the polls through campaigns in 6 states on about 50 campuses. The goal was to create the opportunity for young adults to become involved and invested in the voting process, to understand the importance of their voice and their vote, and to engage and empower voters to make educated decisions, whatever decision that may be. As an intern for the Eau Claire campus New Voters Project team, it was my job to create a plan to achieve these goals.

Three phases were formed to ensure a smooth and effective campaign. The first phase was geared towards getting young adults registered to vote prior to Election Day. With a small but strong core group we started recruiting volunteers to help reach out to every student on campus and every young voter in the area. Phone banking was a way to make verbal contact with as many potential voters as possible. "Phone bankers" would call as many potential voters between the ages of 18 and 24 to ensure they knew about registration and made sure to do everything possible to get them registered. Phone banking was also used to offer volunteer opportunities to anyone who felt moved to contribute time to the campaign. Class raps were scripted speeches used to present information regarding NVP, outlets of information on the election, and the opportunity to register right then and there in class. Professors throughout the university showed their support by allowing our staff to register the students. Also, within the first phase was a Blitz Week that we created to have as many deputized volunteers get as many people registered as possible. Volunteers were standing on every corner of the university, every hallway and class to try to reach as many potential voters as possible.

The second phase was to inform registered voters on when, how, and where to vote. Through phone banking once again we turned our focus to reaching those registered voters and informing them on where to go from there. We also used canvassing, going

door to door, to make face to face contact with our peers to remind them and inform them on voting. Studies showed that face to face contact from a peer increases ones likelihood to actually vote, canvassing was a technique used to make that connection and show our peers that voting is important.

The final phase was to get voters to the polls. This was a chaotic week where every volunteer possible either phone banked, canvassed, or worked at the polls to make sure the youth of our campus knew it was Election Day, knew where to go to vote, what to bring to the polls, and answer any questions regarding the voting process.

In order to make these three phases successful it was important to work with other organizations on campus and get as many people invested in this goal together. NVP worked with organizations such as the college feminists, college democrats, college republicans, Resident Assistants, Hall Directors, and the Administration at the university. We tapped into the resources and student pools of these organizations for support and person-power to accomplish our goals.

Efforts such as these never go without turbulent times. It was a constant challenge to ensure that our campaign remained non-partisan. Although many of us are passionate about our own political beliefs and affiliations the goal was not to convince people who to vote for. It was important to the campaign to simply motivate people to be politically active, even if just on November 2nd. I used this mentality to engage students not by pinpointing a certain viewpoint but rather introducing facts on why young people don't vote and how that affects how the political arena addresses issues that are important to the youth population.

As a personal goal I felt it was increasingly important for not only my peers to vote but especially for young women to vote. As a 21 year old woman I have learned that although women's rights have made important steps towards gender equality I also know that in most states women make, on average, 75 cents to the dollar a man makes in the same job position. I know that as I will soon enter the work force in a predominantly

male dominated field of criminal justice I will face challenges solely because I am a woman. I see voting as the most basic and fundamental way for people to voice their opinion on issues that effect our nation. This is an important right and an important way for women to be politically active and continue to make progress in our society. This was something that motivated me to communicate with my female friends and classmates as I engaged the campus as a whole.

Through NVP I was able to work with so many groups of people and see the power of working together. On Election Day I stood by the polls watching the results of our efforts and was truly amazed. I was able to work closely with motivated students to collectively work towards a common goal, there are few things so rewarding. It was estimated that 2800 young voters from UW-Eau Claire voted before or on Election Day, that is 69.3% of the campus. On a national scale, exit polls showed 18-29 year olds were 51.6% of the vote, up from 42.3% in 2000. What a success. This opportunity proved to be a massive task. I realized how important it is to be empowered for a cause. I learned that change is possible when people are working together and the young vote is just a small step to let people hear our loud voices.

Why Vote?

The Problem:

For over two decades, young people have been turning out to vote in declining numbers. Less than half of eligible young people between the ages of 18 and 24 voted in recent national elections (36.1% in 2000). These are substantially lower participation rates than that of older voters (+/- 70%). Surveys consistently report that young people are unconvinced that voting is an effective tool to better their communities. Since the strength of a democracy is measured by the participation of its citizens, particularly the participation of its younger citizens, this trend points to a troubling future for America's democracy.

Why Don't Young People Vote?

Surveys indicate many reasons why young people aren't voting. They feel it doesn't make a difference, they aren't registered, they don't have enough information, or there is not enough time.

Two explanations for low turnout rates among young people have been bringing together both social scientists and practitioners - young people are seldom the focus of campaign messages and rarely the focus of person-to-person mobilization campaigns.

Studies by Yale Professors Don Green and Alan Gerber suggest that a large-scale peer-to-peer effort of voter contact targeted at young people can make a significant difference in the turnout rate of young voters, increasing youth turnout by 5 to 8 percentage points among those registered voters who were contacted. However, in order to conduct peer-to-peer contact operations and increase youth turnout on a significant scale, Green and Gerber suggest that young people must be registered to vote. Right now, only 50.7% of young people are registered to vote, and poor information is available about those who are registered.

Why Young Voters Are Ignored:

Presidential campaign strategies emphasize a focus on voters that 1) will have a reliable voter turnout for a particular candidate, and 2) will be likely to turnout and vote for that particular candidate. This has been the conventional wisdom of campaigns for many years, and each year as youth voter turnout declines, the rationale is further perpetuated. Because young people don't vote, campaigns feel they shouldn't waste resources targeting young voters. As a result, more and more young people feel disengaged in the very process that drives the engine of our democracy.

Why Young Voters Shouldn't be Ignored:

Because of the polarization of our nation's electoral system, Republicans and Democrats are each battling over a handful of swing voters. Voter turnout and the discovery of new voters has become more critical than ever. Any presidential campaign looking for marginal votes needed to win will find that young voters – with the right approach – can easily become the new voters. The current generation of young voters is essentially up for grabs, and like any prospective customer base, political parties stand to make significant gains from any early connection they make with this growing sector. While the young voting age population has not eclipsed the numbers of older age voters, the young voting age population is growing at a significant rate. By 2004 there will be 23.9 million 18-24 year olds.

Welcome to Wisconsin!

Important Voting Dates & Info:

Registration Deadline: October 20th, or register at your polling location on election day.

Registering at Your Polling Place: Just take proof that you have lived at your present location for 10 days preceding the election. Acceptable proof of residence includes: (1) Your current and complete name; (2) Your current and complete residential address, including a numbered street address, if any, and the name of a municipality. See a list of acceptable IDs.

Early Voting Dates: Starting October 4th

Early Voting Locations: Vote at your City Clerk's office. Call them to get the address and hours, find the office's number here or call the State Elections Board at 608.266.8005.

Request an Absentee Ballot: Click here for an absentee application. Make sure you get your application to your City Clerk's office by Oct. 29th.

Absentee Voting Deadline: Your ballot has to be at your City Clerk's office by 8:00 p.m. on November 2nd.

Find your November 2nd Polling Location: If you have not received anything in the mail, contact the Secretary of State to Wisconsin State Elections Board at (608) 266-8087, or visit the Wisconsin State Elections Board.

Vote on November 2: Polls open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

What to take to the polls: Take some ID with you - either a current and valid photo ID, OR, one of the following: a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, pay check, or government document that shows your name and address.

Find out more information about voting in Wisconsin: Visit the site of the Secretary of State to Wisconsin State Elections Board.

Volunteer Instruction Sheet

Goals of Tabling

RECRUIT volunteers for....

Working the polls on November 2nd, they will get trained and paid \$6.10/hour.
New Voters Project, help with tabling, class raps, phone banking.

EMPOWER Students to Vote (and register if they have not) by providing them with as much information as possible.

INFORM students on the New Voters Project; what is it and what we are doing.

What should you say?

-Inform them on the New Voters Project:
See backside for full information

-Ask them if they do not know the answer to any of the following questions:

How do I help volunteer for NVP?

Answer: You can sign up right here and we can get in contact with you regarding important jobs such as tabling, class raps, phone banking, and just getting the word out.

When do I vote?

Answer: November 2nd

Where do I vote?

Answer: If you live on campus (which they should if they live in the res. halls they vote in Davis Center. If they are off campus see Street Guide.

How do I register?

Answer: We have a registration form right here.

How do I find out about the election?

Answer: Give them the pamphlets offered at the table. Be sure to familiarize yourself with these in case they have questions. Direct their attention to the New Voters Project website.

Materials at the table

- Red shirt for you to wear during your shift, please leave shirt for the next shift
- Signs to hang up on the table or the wall behind the table
- Information on NVP website (2 Pamphlets)
- Additional voting information (1 Pamphlet)
- Clipboards with registration materials

NEW VOTERS PROJECT

Class announcement (GOTV reminder, volunteer ask)

WELCOME: Hi everyone. My name is _____ and I am an organizer with the New Voters Project here in _____. The New Voters Project is the largest effort EVER to mobilize voters our age. We are a non-partisan campaign, sponsored by XPIRG, the _____ Public Interest Research Group and George Washington University.

CAMPAIGN: First, I want to report on the great success we have had in our voter registration efforts. On this campus alone, we registered ____, and across the country over 2 million new young voters were registered by our coalition effort.

Now, Election Day is just XXX days away. But so much of what's going on right now has very little to do with us. The candidates go on and on about issues like Medicare drug benefits or Social Security, but those issues mostly affect senior citizens. How many times have you heard them talk about or seen them run ads about the skyrocketing cost of getting an education? Or how hard it is for young people to get a decent job? Or how much credit card debt people our age have?

The politicians' strategy is not surprising – they're not talking to people our age because we don't usually vote. In 2000, only 36% of 18-24-year-olds voted while more than 70% of old people voted. It's no wonder campaigns pay attention to those who vote.

THAT is what we are working to change in the next __ weeks. We are the largest-ever grassroots campaign to get more young voters to the polls and we are doing something historic: after 30 years of declining voter rates, we are going to increase the number of young people voting.

Why is it important to vote?

Many elections are decided by a handful of voters. The Presidential race in 2000 was decided by 500 voters in the state of Florida. In New Mexico the margin was just over 300. The New Voters Project, we have already registered more than _____ people to vote here in _____.

More importantly, voting is the foundation of our democracy. It is a right people have fought for and died for.

- A hundred years ago, leaders of the women's movement were arrested for protesting outside the White House in a time of war. What were they protesting? Women weren't allowed to vote and they wanted their rights.
- Forty years ago, African Americans were attacked by guard dogs, knocked down by fire hoses, and terrorized by the Ku Klux Klan. Why? They were registering to vote.

There's a more immediate reason to vote too: issues that politicians deal with have a major impact on our lives.

- Getting a job: this is one of the worst job markets in decades – young people have twice as high an unemployment rate as the rest of the country.
- Paying for school: it's even harder to get a good job when you can't get a good education. But the cost of education has skyrocketed – 14% just last year.
- Health care. We hear a lot about prescription drugs for the elderly. But what about basic health care so a person can go to the doctor? Nearly one third of 18-24-year-olds doesn't have basic health care— we're the most uninsured group in the country.

It's not like people our age all have the same opinion on issues, but there's something larger at stake here. We need to make them pay attention to us and to the issues that matter to us. And the truth is that if we vote, they will. About 9 million 18-24-year-olds voted in 2000. 17 million people our grandparents' age voted in that same election. That would be a force politicians would have to pay attention to. So, we need to turn out to the polls this November in massive numbers.

So this fall we are working in 6 states—Oregon, Colorado, Iowa, Nevada, New Mexico and Wisconsin—to turn 18 to 24 year olds out to the polls. In order to do this, we need to make sure that all of these voters go to the polls. There are only ____ days until the election, so we need to get started right away.

OPPORTUNITIES/PLAN: That is where you all come in. First, I need you all to pledge to go to the polls on November 2nd. Here in xx, we can actually vote early (insert early voting info). If you have questions, or need information, please contact me or visit our website at www.newvotersproject.org. (Write your contact info on the board)

Second, we need to contact our friends and neighbors and make sure everyone knows where and when to vote. If each of you commits to just 2 hours of volunteering around Election Day, we can ensure that our campaign is a success and that people our age get to the polls like never before. You can hold signs, make calls, stand at the polls, answer the phone, drive the bus to the polls, chalk the sidewalks, database, run hot chocolate out to the voters, anything you want, it will make a difference. Please check the volunteer box and I will be in touch about how you can help.

We stand at the verge of an historic moment. For 30 years, voting rates for people our age have gone down. Politicians have paid less and less attention to us. Issues we care about, problems we face get ignored. This year, in the next X days, we have the chance to turn that trend around. MILLIONS of young people registered to vote in the past 10 months, there is a buzz about the elections that is unprecedented, and there are really serious issues at stake. We know that people care about these issues and the implications on their lives.

***personal note about an issue you care about that won't get addressed without young voters turning out

I really believe that in the next xxx days, if we do our jobs right, millions of people our age will turn out on Election Day and make politicians pay attention to us. I am working on this campaign full-time. I feel lucky to be here knowing that we have incredible momentum by already registering record numbers of new young voters, and now, in the final weeks/day, I know that with your help, we can turn them out. Politicians will have no choice; we will make them pay attention to us.



Campus Volunteer Pledge

In order to make them pay attention to us, it is going to take a massive turnout of Young Voters in Wisconsin and in neighborhoods all across America. Young people with the New Voters Project will identify and mobilize young voters in precincts surrounding over 100 campuses and make 2004 an historic election for America and for our generation. Too much is at stake for America to stay home.

I pledge to become an Action Volunteer and dedicate _____ hours to mobilize the target voters on my campus.

Signed _____ **Print Name:** _____

Address: (Street, City, State, ZIP) _____

Cell Phone: _____ **Other Phone:** _____

e-mail: _____

Between now and Election Day (check off each activity), I will:

_____ *Volunteer 10 hours before 10/30/04 and talk to young voters.*

_____ *Spend 5 hours the weekend before the election contacting voters.*

_____ *Volunteer 5 hours on Election Day to get voters out to the polls.*

Make Them Pay Attention To Us!

WE MADE HISTORY!!!!

Table 1 – Election 2004 Youth Voter Turnout

Presidential Election Year	Percentage of all voters who are age 18-29 ⁱ	Estimated Number of Votes Cast by Voters Age 18-29 ⁱⁱ	Percentage of citizens age 18-29 who voted (turnout)
2004	18.4%	20,996,000	51.6%
2000	16.8%	16,260,000	42.3%
1996	17.1%	14,452,000	34.9%
1992	20.7%	19,073,000	47.9%

Source: The percentages of voters age 18-29 are obtained from national exit polls. The numbers of votes cast are obtained from the Associated Press as of 6am the day following the election. Estimated voter turnout is obtained by taking the estimated number of votes cast and dividing it by the estimated population of 18-29 year old citizens from the Current Population Survey.

ⁱ For consistency, all figures in this column are derived from national exit polls. Other CIRCLE documents use Census Current Population Survey data instead of exit polls. However, the Census Bureau's election data for 2004 will not be released until 2005, so this fact sheet uses exit polls as a provisional source that allows comparisons to past years.

ⁱⁱ This number will likely increase over the next days and weeks. In 2000, the vote tally on the day after the Election rose by 8 million over the subsequent weeks. As the vote tally rises, youth turnout may rise somewhat.