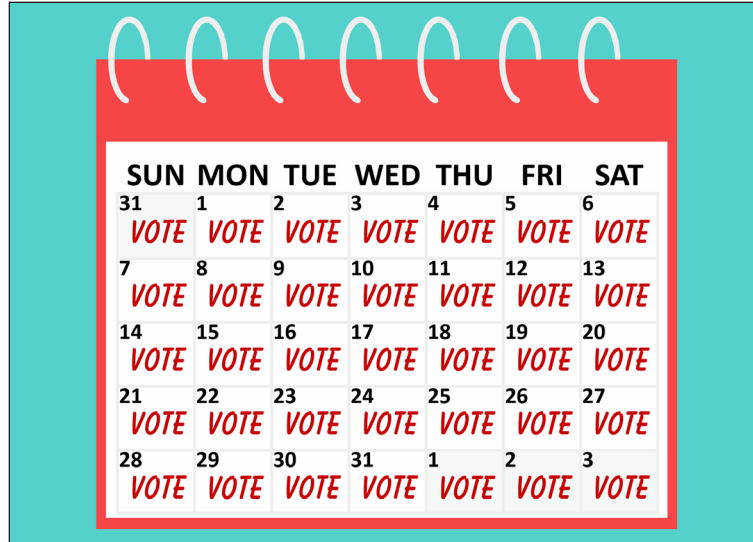


Early voting brings convenience to first time voters



ANTHONY BEIMAL / GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Illinois citizens had several options to vote leading up to the election.

JADA HOFFMAN

ASST. NEWS EDITOR

Voting, especially for first-timers, can seem scary. However, it's a simple and relieving process that comes in different forms.

Illinoisans were able to request mail-in ballots until Oct. 29, vote early until Nov. 2 or they can vote on Nov. 3. With all of these options, there's no reason for eligible voters to not vote in this election.

Early voting promotes civic engagement as it encourages people to partake in the election

process. Reasons such as work or school causes people to not vote, however, with early voting they have about a month before the election to find time to vote.

COVID-19 is a newfound reason as to why people may not want to go out and vote. However, there are several options, including mail in ballots, that one can take to still vote. There's little to no excuses for why someone cannot vote.

Rose Kavanaugh, a graduate assistant in the Office of Student Activities, participated in early voting at the Romeoville Village

Township.

"I didn't know what to expect, especially with this being an intense election, so I went early," Kavanaugh said. She wanted to avoid the long lines and rowdiness, and was happy she came early because the line gradually extended after her. She waited in line for about 45 minutes and was greeted by an election judge.

"I brought several documents -- driver's license, student ID and mail from Lewis -- because I wasn't really sure what I needed to prove my residency since I was using my Lewis address," Kavanaugh said.

Illinoisans only need to bring two forms of identification, with one including their current address.

According to Kavanaugh, her election judge was very helpful and nice, especially after learning she was a college student. After accepting her ID's, the judge asked if she had an absentee ballot. Kavanaugh said she was nervous because she did have one and feared it would impact her ability to vote.

"I explained I forgot it and she told me to ensure I destroyed it to avoid having duplicate votes," Kavanaugh explained.

Usually, people are instructed

to bring their absentee ballots so the judges can destroy them. Shortly after this, Kavanaugh put her ballot into a machine and was done with the process.

She explained it was a "smooth" process.

Kavanaugh has had three opportunities to vote in a presidential election, however, this is her first time voting.

"Compared to the other times I had a chance to vote, I'm wiser, older and I've experienced difficult times," Kavanaugh said. "I wasn't a long-term thinker. When I was 18 I cared about where I was living on campus, not who I was voting for. I have developed more skills and matured."

Originally, Kavanaugh requested an absentee ballot, however she was not confident in her vote being included. After gaining more knowledge on the process, she decided early voting was better for her.

"I still don't know what to expect from this ballot, but I'm happy I voted," Kavanaugh said. "I will for sure take advantage of early voting in the future. It's an easier process that allows me to be free on election day and not worry about waiting in long lines."

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Students organize and lead Black Lives Matter protest

JADA HOFFMAN

ASST. NEWS EDITOR

From online petitions to posts on the Lewis U app, students have found ways to effectively and efficiently make their voices heard on campus.

On Oct. 27, three organizations including Catholic Relief Services, Black Student Union and Sigma Lambda Gamma Kappa Epsilon co-sponsored a Black Lives Matter protest from St. Charles Borromeo to the Brother James Gaffney, FSC, Center.

Over 40 people participated in the student-led protest. Faculty members who participated included Chief Diversity Officer and Director of Multicultural Student Services Dr. Kristi Kelly, Assistant Director of Multicultural Student Services, James Williams and Chief of Police Michael Zelgado.

Despite the chilly weather, people came together to support, listen and understand the social injustices Black people have faced throughout the years.

Signage was handed out to encourage students to further participate, reading "Breonna Taylor," "Say His Name," "Say Her Name," and oth-



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Students come together to protest social injustices against Black people.

ers. Aside from holding up the posters, students also led chants, with no megaphone, such as "No Justice, No Peace!" and "Black Lives Matter."

Student protesters weren't just Black students chanting "Black Lives Matter!" It was a diverse population of students from different back-

grounds showing their support for the movement.

Sophomore biology major Amelia Thorgesen participated in the protest to show support for her fellow peers. "This was my first ever protest, and I have been wanting to go for a while... I see what's going on in the world and it makes me sad. I have

a lot of close friends who are people of color and I feel for them," said Thorgesen.

For other students, this movement was personally connected to them and their experiences as a Black person. Senior aviation unmanned aircraft systems major Jaylen Bush is heavily involved on campus as a Resident Assis-

stant, the president of the Alpha Phi Alpha Inc. chapter, a member of the Black Student Union and also in several other organizations.

"Before any title I have and organization I am part of... I am a Black man first. I am a Black man that feels attacked by dangers in this society. It's only necessary that I do my part to make the world better and showing up to the protest is part of it," Bush explained.

Like Thorgesen, this was Bush's first protest. He attempted to go over the summer however, he did not want to put his family at risk with COVID-19. As his first protest, he was proud to be part of something big.

"From my years of being at Lewis, this is the first modern protest for something as big as this. I'm happy to have been part of history. I believe we accomplished a lot with this protest and opened doors of opportunities for other students. We also helped those who may feel ashamed of openly showing their Black pride, whether it's with a BLM hoodie or shirt," Bush said.

'STUDENT BLM PROTEST'
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