

October 27, 2020

To: The John Jay College Community
Re: The Importance of Voting

It's election season, and I am writing to remind you to make a plan to use your voice, and exercise your right to vote. There are so many reasons it's important to vote.

Voting is power. It's a power that none of us should take lightly, a power that has been fought for tirelessly, and a power that can impact our communities immensely.



Voting is democracy in action. As President Abraham Lincoln once famously said, we live in a nation with a “government of the people, by the people, and for the people.” By participating in the election, you’re tapping into one of the most effective ways we can help shape the future of our country. Health care, criminal justice reform, student loan debt, climate change, immigration, wealth and education disparities—voting gives you a say in all of these important issues and it directly speaks to the leadership of our country.

Voting rights were hard won. The path to full voting rights for all American citizens has been a long and painful journey. Originally, under the Constitution, only white male citizens over the age of 21 could cast a ballot. Through centuries of protests, struggles, and constitutional amendments, every citizen over the age of 18 now has the right to vote. For me, voting is a sacred right because my parents were part of the generation that fought hard for Black people’s right to vote. Young people represent one of the largest voting blocs in our country, and this year, [data shows](#) that they are already showing up to vote in record numbers. I know our John Jay community will do the same.

Voting is vital for our community. As a college focused on issues of justice, this election means a great deal to us all. For information, inspiration, and resources on the election, please visit our [JJC Rocks the Vote](#) website. To better understand the

impact of your vote, tune into John Jay's "The Power of Your Vote Series" including: "[Understanding the 'Science' of Election Polling & Political Behavior](#)" today, at 1:45 p.m., and our "[Call to Action: Get Out and Vote Pep Rally](#)" on October 29, at 4:00 p.m. I'd also like to thank all of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni who have worked hard to promote voter registration and elevate election engagement.

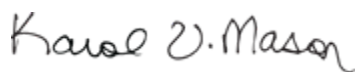
Voting options are available. All of us have different obligations, schedules, and concerns. That's why it's so important to make a specific plan to vote. John Jay employees have the option to speak with their supervisors about their [voting needs](#) to ensure their ability to vote. All New York City registered voters can exercise their right to vote three ways:

- **Vote by mail. *Today*,** October 27, is the last day registered New York City voters can request an absentee ballot for the General Election by going online (nycabsentee.com), faxing 212-487-5349, mailing your [local borough office](#), or emailing your application (in pdf format) to Apply4Absentee@boe.nyc. Once your ballot is received, drop it off at an official election site, or mail it in ensuring that it receives a postmark no later than November 3.
- **Vote early.** Until Sunday, November 1, registered New York City voters can cast their ballots in-person at one of the city's 88 [early voting poll sites](#).
- **Vote on Election Day.** On Tuesday, November 3, registered New York City voters can vote in-person at their official Election Day [polling site](#).

We're facing a critical time in our country's history. It's understandable to feel anxious or overwhelmed, but what I don't want you to feel is helpless. Don't let anyone tell you that voting doesn't matter. Don't give away your power or your hope. Instead, channel your passion for justice through your actions.

By participating in the election process, in whatever way you can, you're investing in the future of our country.

Thank you,



Karol V. Mason
President

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