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2009 Professional Practices Program

**Vote! You Count!
Voter Outreach and Education Campaign**

Los Angeles County, CA

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2009 Professional Practices Submission

VOTE! YOU COUNT!
NOVEMBER 4, 2008 PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL ELECTION
VOTER OUTREACH AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

ABSTRACT OF THE PROGRAM

As the historic and high-profile Presidential General Election approached, the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) initiated innovative voter outreach and education partnerships with local print media, radio stations, billboard service providers, television outlets and notable sporting franchises. All indications were that election jurisdictions throughout the nation should anticipate record-setting numbers of new and infrequent voters based on the widespread interest in this election. Ultimately, Americans would vote into office either the nation's first African-American President or female Vice President. Los Angeles County was up to the challenge of engaging and educating those voters and launched the historic **VOTE! YOU COUNT!** outreach and education campaign.

THE PROBLEM/NEED FOR THE PROGRAM

The Federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 requires election jurisdictions to implement and educate voters about provisional voting, voting systems, second-chance voting, and multi-lingual and disability requirements. In compliance with language assistance provisions of the Voting Rights Act, Los Angeles County currently provides voter assistance in seven languages including Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, Tagalog (Filipino), Vietnamese and English. The scale and diversity of Los Angeles County presents a unique challenge to ensuring that all voters are properly educated and informed about HAVA requirements and the voting process.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The RR/CC met the challenge by implementing the historic **VOTE! YOU COUNT!** voter outreach and education program to engage both existing and potential voters. Activities were carried out in all mandated languages and could be seen and heard throughout Los Angeles County at various community events, in print, web, television, radio and billboards – all based on a common branding that tied the program together.

After much brainstorming, a multi-faceted approach to reaching voters was developed to engage them in the election process and to educate them in advance of Election Day. The interest in the election would innately bring a need to more aggressively promote HAVA requirements and invaluable Election Day messaging. The voter outreach and education plan incorporated many innovative elements, including a strong web component that was promoted at every event and via every media outlet, including dozens of news stories covering election-related activities in advance of Election Day.

An unparalleled example of the RR/CC's program was illustrated by the partnership with the CBS family, a media outlet that encompasses television, radio, internet, and outdoor media. More specifically, this partnership included production and airing of Public Service Announcements, instructional video vignettes, outdoor billboards and bus shelter posters, and website informational displays (election countdown clock, online chats and customized video pages) featuring members of the Emmy award winning newscast personalities on Los Angeles CBS television stations—KCAL Channel 9 and KCBS Channel 2. It was a Departmental priority to emphasize HAVA requirements in an easy and instructive way. The instructional video vignettes,

were 30-second spots highlighting Election Day information, covering topics such as: “How to prepare for Election Day”; “How to find your Polling Place”; “How to Vote by Mail”; “Know what’s available at your Polling Place”; and “Know what to do at the Polling Place.” The benefit to producing these vignettes was that they could be used in diverse ways—aired via public television, web, and local access cable television; and used for training purposes as stand-alone video clips. Additionally the vignettes were designed so that they could be used for future election purposes and not limited to the 2008 election cycle.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Successful implementation of the RR/CC’s Voter Outreach and Education campaign relied heavily on the use of technology as the means to convey information to voters. Public Service Announcements were produced and aired not only on public television airways and multi-lingual cable access, but also streamed online via the internet on KCAL9.com, KCBS2.com, AOL online, community access television in multiple cities and on the Department’s website.

Traditional print media was replaced with an online-only feature allowing the LA Times and LA Daily News family to promote voter outreach and education information to thousands of readers who access news information online. These sites were used exclusively to allow voters to have immediate access to outreach information. All radio promotion, in English and in the mandated languages, included a reference to a web link that would refer individuals to the RR/CC’s homepage. Additionally, the RR/CC partnered with two sports franchises—the Los Angeles Dodgers and UCLA Bruins Football. Both teams highlighted voter outreach and education information via their websites and via “jumbo-tron” announcements during home games. As it relates to the Dodgers, an LED ribbon promoted the Department’s website as a means by which individuals could access information to register to vote, find election-related deadlines and obtain relevant outreach information. An all-time high number of hits were received on the RR/CC’s website in the months leading up to the historic election and the use of the internet was an integral component of the overall voter outreach and education plan.

THE RESULTS/SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM

The RR/CC had a record-setting election year on many fronts. Though training and preparation played a significant and relevant part in advance of the November 2008 Presidential Election, there is no denying that the **VOTE! YOU COUNT!** voter outreach and education campaign played a pivotal role in setting the foundation for the following records set in 2008:

- Most Registered Voters on File – 4.2 million
- Greatest Number of Poll Workers to work on Election Day – 27,000
- Most Vote-by-Mail Ballots Requested – 1 million
- Highest Voter Turnout in over 40 Years – Nearly 82%
- Most Phone Calls Received – 146,500
- Increased Early Voting Turnout – Over 30,000; 17,000 during the last 4 days
- Most Provisional Ballots Issued – 270,000
- Highest Turnout of Student and County Poll Workers
- Greatest Number of Attendees to Poll Worker Training Classes – over 30,000
- Most Web Hits – 775,000
- Most Press Releases Issued in Advance of any other Election – 14
- Record-setting Close of Voter Registration Event Registrations – Nearly 20,000



During the 2008 football season, LA County reached out to college sports fans, using ISP Sports

- 269,749 – College Sports Fans saw L.A. County Registrar's "Vote You Count!" campaign in person
- 67,437 – Average number of College Sports Fans that attended the four UCLA games
- 4 – Games televised by national networks
 - Including Fox Sports Net, ABC, Fox Sports Net Prime Ticket, Fox Sports Net West



ISP

America's Home
for College Sports

Loge Level LED

LA County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk received one (1) ½ inning during every home game during the regular season from 8/11-9/25/08 (22 games) and 4 BONUS ½ innings during the playoffs!

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Voter Outreach and Education Campaign

The Registrar's Office created innovative partnerships with organizations such as CBS and KCAL 9, the Los Angeles Dodgers, the UCLA Bruins, and multiple television, radio and print media organizations in an effort to educate Los Angeles County citizens about the many voter services available to them. The VOTE-YOU COUNT! outreach and education campaign highlighted the RR/ CCs multilingual services, voting options for voters with specific needs, and voting equipment. In addition to the television and radio presence, the campaign included highway billboards, public transportation shelters and posters that alerted the public about Election Day and included Registrar contact information. The campaign reached millions of County residents and engaged local community organizations.

4 Week Period

120 Sheet Posters

150 Transit Shelters

50 Bulletins



