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## Dominican to lead initiative to engage youth in 2016 Debates

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## **Dominican to lead initiative to engage youth in 2016 Debates**

As a voter education partner of the Commission on Presidential Debates, Dominican University of California will lead a first of its kind initiative that will utilize technology and social media to energize a new generation to be active in our democracy (#collegedebate16).

Dominican has convened a group of national leaders in technology, civic engagement, and education to engage young voters throughout the United States in the upcoming presidential debates.

“The goal is to connect students in a vibrant, participatory, real-time discussion about the major issues of our time,” said Dominican University of California President Mary B. Marcy.

“At a time when public discourse is waning, the need for colleges and universities to empower students to be civically engaged has never been greater,” she said. “This project will draw on technology and social media to give young voters a platform to voice their beliefs, become civically engaged, and have a meaningful impact on the political process.”

Among the initial organizations working with Dominican on this project are [TurboVote](#) and Brigade.

TurboVote is the flagship program of Democracy Works, a nonpartisan 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the idea that voting should fit the way we live. TurboVote is an online application that helps voters get registered, stay registered, and find the information they need to vote in every election for the rest of their lives. Specifically, TurboVote tracks voters’ election calendars and gets in touch through email and text messages before every election to assist them in registering to vote, updating their voter registration information, requesting absentee ballots, and finding a polling place.

Brigade is a technology startup founded in 2014 to tackle the problem of declining citizen power and engagement in our democracy. The company, which raised a \$9.5MM Series A from investors led by Sean Parker, Marc Benioff, and Ron Conway, is building tools for expressing your civic identity, learning about your friends and neighbors, and working toward common goals together. In June, Brigade released its beta: a place that lets you express what you think about important issues, and see where your friends and others stand. This iOS, Android and Web app is the first in a series of tools the company will roll out over the next year to re-energize our democracy by getting people to act together.

Dominican University of California is an independent university of almost 2,000 highly diverse undergraduate and graduate students. Located in Marin County, just north of San Francisco, Dominican integrates inspiring teaching and supportive mentoring with internships, community service, research, study abroad, and leadership opportunities.

The University is the recipient of numerous national awards in recognition of its work focused on civic engagement, equity, and democracy. Dominican is one of five institutions in the nation selected for The Washington Center 2015 New York Life Civic Engagement Award. The University is a recipient of the 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and has been recognized multiple times with the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

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