



START SEARCHING
NOW!



Register to the CollegeBound Network and receive a **FREE** issue of College Bound Magazine.

home

goBeauty

goCeleb

goFashion

goFitness

goHottie

goPlay

goRead

goSerious

goStudy

theBuzz

contests



www.collegebound.net

goSerious

Helping at the Polls

by Ysolt Usigan

As you watched the election coverage on TV into the morning hours of November 3rd, probably the only thing on your mind was who would be elected president. With your fingers crossed and your rear at the edge of your seat, you witnessed states turn either blue or red and watched the electoral votes grow for each candidate. Whether or not you were pleased with the results, you can be grateful to those who worked at the polls that day. The poll volunteers may not have helped your candidate campaign directly, nonetheless, they facilitated an intense process.

The process that attracted lots of young voters also attracted many youth volunteers to pitch in at voting locations. **Read on about two girls who got involved and worked at the polls on Election Day 2004...**



Student: Denise Anne McCarthy
Poll Placement: Good Luck Community Center (Lanham, MD)
One Word to Describe Election Day: Anticipation

Out of the 140 students from the University of Maryland (College Park, MD) who wanted to participate in the Help America Vote College Program, not everyone got a placement. In fact, Denise Anne McCarthy was the only college student working at the Good Luck Community Center that day. The University of Maryland held a two-hour training session to go over guidelines and how to use the equipment with those chosen to work the polls.

The 18-year-old student volunteer programmed plastic voter access cards and handed voter authority cards to people as they checked in. "There were long lines; people were anxious to vote," she recalls. "No one stormed out after having to wait on line -- you could tell they really wanted to vote."

But it wasn't as crowded as many had anticipated. "There was a lot of hype leading up to it, [since] everyone was

search go-girl.com

GO

Go-Girl Web



ZIP CODE

CAREER INTEREST

- Art/Design
 Aviation
 Business
 Culinary Arts
 Health Care
 Technology

GO



National Fall 2005

**In This Issue...
Get It Now!**

- Free StudentPak
- Student of the Year
- High School of the Year
- Student Cookbook

[anxious] to be there and do their part. But, there really wasn't that much of a mob scene," she explains. "In the morning, we had a lot of people [voting], but it tapered off."

For Denise, a kinesiology major and aspiring athletic trainer, politics and government is only a side interest. Her reason for pitching in at the polls? **"I did it because I wanted to help the elderly voters. A lot of them just didn't understand the computerized touch-screen voting system,"** she explains. "I also helped a woman who couldn't even read the screen. I had to explain to her who each candidate was and what their referendums were."

Denise sums up Election Day as long and tiring. Even still, she says she had fun. "I met some interesting people," she says. "Plus, I got to help in one of our country's most important elections, or at least one of the most significant in my lifetime."



Student: Cori Cohen
Poll Placement: Hyattsville
 Municipal Building (Prince
 Georges County, MD)
**One Word to Describe Election
 Day:** Inspiring

"The fact that we have the power to choose and shape our future is amazing," says Cori Cohen, also a freshman at the University of Maryland. "I had the opportunity to see this firsthand -- I saw democracy in action [as] hundreds of people exercised their rights, expressed their opinions, and showed America they cared. I was truly touched."

During her training session, student volunteers were given a 100-page manual of information about being an election judge. "I was a voting unit judge," explains Cori, the only college student at her polling spot. "We were using new machines this year, and each voter needed a card to insert into the machine in order for it to work. The card is set so each person can only vote once. I was in charge of resetting the cards."

For volunteers, the hard work really began the previous night. "We [had] a meeting at the precinct the night before to begin setting up for Election Day," she says. "The next day, we arrived at the municipal building at 6 a.m. to finish setting up. [When] the doors opened at 7 a.m., there was already a long line of people waiting to vote."

The 18-year-old, who's majoring in government and politics, admits the day was stressful. "The election was so close and everyone knew how important their vote

was, which is probably why they patiently waited in the long lines," she recalls. "Older people even came up to me and told me it was their first time voting!"

The polls in Maryland closed at 8 p.m. When Election Day came to an end, it was up to Cori and other volunteers to tally the votes. "We had to count and recount the number of people who voted with the number of votes on the machines, close down the machines, and make sure everything matched up," she explains. "We didn't go home until after midnight."

Cori, who's passionate about politics, was honored to have the opportunity to be part of the voting process. "I've always felt voting was important -- that's why I signed up [to volunteer]," she attests. **"I wanted to represent my generation and prove to the rest of the country that we do care about our future."**

[home](#) | [beauty](#) | [celeb](#) | [fashion](#) | [fitness](#) | [hottie](#)
[play](#) | [read](#) | [serious](#) | [study](#) | [the buzz](#) | [contests](#)
[compare colleges](#)

Corporate Information: [About Us](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)
©2005 - **THE COLLEGBOUND NETWORK**. All rights reserved.