

Hi everyone and welcome back to another episode of All Careers Considered, a podcast produced by the Walter Center for Career Achievement at IU. If you're new to the podcast my name is Molly and I'm your host and if you're not new to the podcast, you know that we usually air a new episode of the podcast each Friday, but today I'm excited to share a bonus episode with you all in honor of national voter registration day. So, I'm excited to introduce to you a special guest a colleague of mine, Mark Fraley, who is the associate director of the Pace Program at IU and today we're going to talk a little bit about voting its impact on your career which really fits nicely into kind of our theme of the season which is democracy so thanks for being here Mark.

Mark: Thank you very much, Molly. I'm really happy to be here.

Molly: Yeah so I guess just tell me a little bit about you and your role within the Pace Program at IU.

Ma: Yeah you know, so I am the Associate Director of Pace at IU and that's the political and civic engagement program so Pace for folks that don't know it is a certificate program so that people... where our motto is to bring theory to practice, you know, people have the ability to be able to learn about key philosophical concepts and theories but also be able to relate them into the day-to-day affairs of being a citizen right and so that goes all the way from you know voting to advocacy to engaging with neighbors to being able to find all the ways possible to be able to seek productive changes in the world.

Mo: That's awesome. I was also reading about how you served as the chairman of the democratic party of Monroe county between 2015 and 2019. So I'd love to hear a little bit more about that experience and how you got involved with that.

Ma: Yeah, so I mean I think it's... so I served as the chair of the Democratic party of Monroe county from 2015 to 2019 as you had mentioned and you know that really came in... I think it's important to note that I'm serving here in Pace as well as the Big Ten voting challenge in a purely nonpartisan activity we want to get Democrats registered to vote, we want to get Republicans registered to vote, we want to get Independents registered to vote... our goal is to be able to make sure that we're mobilizing and energizing students that said in the past I have served in that partisan capacity and so you know their the job is basically working with a lot of candidates you're having to recruit candidates for local office you're working with a different people who are in government to be able to you, know, resolve disputes or to be able to make sure that people can be able to work productively together, um, there's also interacting with you know, the state parties and the national parties on various projects and so then a big piece of the job also is to chair different caucuses and so when a person is in elected office, whether it's a state senator or a county commissioner, and they have to leave the office for whatever reason, then this is something that gets filled by precinct committee people at certain special meetings and your job is to be able to bring all the candidates into that process

and chair the meetings in which those things happen. So it's a really multi-faceted job and I think it's one of those things that =works that really demonstrates the importance of getting involved in local issues as well as national ones.

Mo: Yeah cool thanks for explaining that. So you are obviously someone who you know cares about voting and um likes to be involved in politics at different levels. So obviously with, you know, the national election approaching it's really more important than ever that people vote especially young people, so in your opinion, why is it important that specifically college students vote and I guess on the flip side of that, for students that think "oh my vote doesn't really matter who cares". What would you say to that student that would have a reaction like that?

Ma: Yeah you know and this is things like I've heard that many times and I understand a lot of frustration that people are having, right, you know, we're in a very difficult environment right now when you can take a look at you know whether it's forest fires or street protests or a pandemic or the economy it's very easy to kind of get assumed in all that's wrong with the world but when you're looking at those types of things you also have to realize that crises provide opportunities and to be able and voting is one of the ways... it's just one way, but it is one of the ways in which you can take control over your future and you can take control over the country and society's future, you know, and voting is a first step. There's also the importance of advocacy, of being able to communicate with lawmakers or running for office. There's a whole lot of different ways in order to be involved but this is a matter of taking control of your own future.

Mo: yeah absolutely that's a great answer um so i'd love to hear you know for someone who might be interested in actually going into politics in their career or maybe doing similar work to what you do do you have any advice or guidance for students that are interested in those careers

Ma: Yeah you know I think that one of the most important things that you can do if you're really considering a role in in politics or in in service really be able to think about the fundamental service component of this you know I think that oftentimes we kind of get really excited about the idea of being an elected official or the idea of, you know, being in the papers or the idea of a lot of this type of stuff and so I think that really, making sure that you get your start in politics doing the things that serve other people really getting a hold of the idea of service is what it really means to be in politics. I think that that's one of the most important things that people can really think to be able to do is sometimes let go of the dazzling distractions and focus on what's really improving the lives of the people around you.

Mo: Yeah, i'm really glad you made that distinction because I'm sure it can be you know easy to get caught up in "oh it seems glamorous and kind of having that personal stature" but it really is about serving others and I think it's important to remember that. How about you know

any specific classes you can take on campus or maybe student organizations to get involved in, are there any that come to mind whether they're, you know, regardless of party affiliation that you could get involved in?

Ma: Yeah, you know, I mean I think that there are tons of different organizations that are on campus you know if you want to do the partisan politics route there are groups like the college Democrats or the college Republicans that people might want to be able to get involved in, there's a group called campus action for democracy that's related to a community organization group here called Hoosier Action, you know there is the Social Justice in America series that is going on right now there is also um the NAACP, there are tons of different organizations that you can get involved in, there's also ways to be able to make civic engagement work with the organizations that you're already part of if you're part of the Greek community, then there are ways to be able to incorporate, Civic Engagement as part of these processes and a lot of people do engage in non-profit work as part of those right, so I think it's important to remember that getting involved is about service and you can do that in so many different ways, so I mean this is the thing it's like if you reach out to let's say you are a if you want to uh if you're a Republican um reach out to my good friend William Ellis, who's the chair of the Republican party here. If you are a Democrat, you can reach out to Jennifer Crossley, another good friend who's the chair of the Democratic party here. People will take the time and get to know you also, you're being able to um... go to local council meetings... like we have the opportunity to actually get to know the people who are making decisions that are impacting us right now, you know the people on the city council, the county council, the county commissioner, they're all considering right now a very important tax that will deal with issues of climate change. There's a lot of people who are in support of it a lot of people who are opposed opposed to it on a lot of different ways go find yourself um find out a little bit more about these types of things you can go to um county council meetings and you can talk to these people directly and they're eager to hear from you.

Mo: Awesome, well thank you so much for sharing all that really helpful information, I think that kind of wraps up the questions that I have but you know i guess just to wrap things up I'd love to just kind of hear, what are your thoughts on overall, what voting means to your career regardless of if you, you decide to go into politics, you decided to go into education, maybe you work in business, um how can voting really impact you on a personal level as students are developing and taking steps in their career?

Ma: Yeah well I mean I think that every time that you're moving towards your career, no matter what your career is, you're about taking positive action, you know, and voting is about taking positive action right and so that voting is taking positive action for the benefit of society and sometimes when you're actually in you're starting your careers you need to be thinking about ways in which you can take positive action to be able to benefit the people who are in your network and so I think that there's a direct correlation between these things that you can do to benefit society and those things that you can do to be able to promote yourself in the world

and before I let you go, national voter registration day is coming around September 22nd. The quickest, easiest way for IU students to register to vote is through turbovote which is [iu.turbovote.org](http://iu.turbovote.org). It is very simple, easy to use, it's user-friendly and it will help you be able to keep up all the things that you need to do in order to both register to vote and vote by election day.

Mo: Okay perfect thanks for sharing that and we can definitely link that webpage right below our episodes, that'll be easy to get for students but yeah thank you so much for being here Mark it was great talking with you and thank you for sharing all this really helpful info

Ma: Thank you so much Molly!

Mo: Yeah thanks for listening to another episode of All Careers Considered and we'll see you next time IU!