

Attention all Boys State Attendees:

**Kids Voting
Minnesota**

Minnesota's *premier*
Youth Voter Education Organization,

Presents

A patriotic Leadership Opportunity:

**“2010 Youth Vote
In
Honor of a Veteran”**



This can be as simple as a class project,
a student club project involving an entire grade or school,
or a project involving several schools in a district.

This fall over 2 million Minnesota citizens are expected to vote, electing a new governor and other important legislative and congressional representatives. While that is a large number, it still means 1.5 million Minnesotans who are eligible, will not vote.

Kids Voting Minnesota has been working toward increasing voter competence and voter turn out since its inception in Duluth in 1994. In 2004, Duluth had the highest voter turnout in the entire nation, 91.5%. Kids Voting Duluth helped make that happen by developing a habit of active citizenship and voting in the youth before they turned 18.

In 2010, we are partnering with the Minnesota Secretary of State to duplicate an adult voter education initiative, “Vote in Honor of a Veteran,” in the student population. This incredible initiative accomplishes three objectives:

- **It encourages students and adults to become educated about the candidates while giving them an opportunity to vote.**
- **It honors veterans for their sacrifice and cements in the minds of young people the connection between the sacrifice of American military men and women and the freedom we have to vote.**
- **It promotes intergenerational discussion as students talk with parents and relatives about veterans in their lives**

The project has six steps:

1. Buttons and information about honoring a veteran with a vote are disseminated to students
2. Students write the name of a veteran on their button and wear it during the election season.
3. Students go online and write a tribute to the veteran they are honoring (this can also include a picture and/or short video) in the “Veteran Tribute Gallery.”
4. Students vote online at <http://www.kidsvoting.com> (or in the polls for those schools that are part of a district-wide Kids Voting program.)
5. Following the election, students can view results online
6. Students will also be able to view the “Veteran Tribute Gallery” online anytime before, during, and after the election and read the various tributes other students have written.

An individual student or a student leadership group or club takes on the task of disseminating information and buttons (as pictured) to students in the school. The method of distribution could include a school assembly where a veteran is invited to speak, or veterans in the community are invited to come and be thanked for their service. Then the buttons could be passed out along with instructions.

Students are encouraged to study the candidates and prepare to vote. Students in Kids Voting districts can vote at the polls on Election Day. **All Minnesota students will be able to vote online at www.kidsvoting.com.** Online ballots will be tailored to each school district.

Our goal is to surpass the adult “Veteran Tribute Gallery” size. If you are even remotely interested in possibly participating in this project next fall, please e-mail me. I need to get a rough idea of the number of buttons and materials to have printed during the summer months. Thanks to funds from the state of Minnesota, participation in this project is **totally free of charge.**

Lars Sandstrom, Executive Director, Kids Voting Minnesota
E-mail: lsandstrom@mnpower.com phone: 218-355 3179