

A-State Political Club Leaders Speak on the 2020 Presidential Election

What's Your Opinion?

Last week, we asked students what they thought was the scariest part of October: Midterms, politics, or Halloween.

Out of 43 responses, here are the results:

- Midterms -- 18
- Politics -- 24
- Halloween -- 1



Next Week's Poll:

Halloween Plans

What are your plans for Halloween? Will you be staying home or will you be going out?

Students can answer the poll and find previous poll results on The Herald's website, theherald.home.blog, or on The Herald's Instagram page, [@astateherald](https://www.instagram.com/astateherald). Website polls are posted on Wednesdays and Instagram polls are posted on Mondays.

These and future articles can be found on the Opinion section of The Herald's website. All comics and memes can be found in the Comics section.

MACY WALKER

A-STATE YOUNG DEMOCRATS PRESIDENT



Macy Walker is a junior political science major from Bald Knob.

Although voting and elections have always been an important piece of our nation's history, it seems the importance of elections grows as each election cycle begins. After witnessing the failure of our government officials over the recent past, it is vital to let our voices be heard.

The Arkansas State University Young Democrats are co-chartered with the Young Democrats of America and College Democrats of America, supporting progressive Democratic candidates up and down the ballot. In Arkansas, Democrats are a superminority, yet that does not stop our activism.

For the 2020 fall semester, one pivotal issue of the A-State Young Democrats' platform has been voter registration and education. Along with groups such as the collegiate chapter of the NAACP and Vote A-State, we held multiple voter registration drives, both on and off campus. These drives have resulted in the registration of hundreds of voters. The ability to participate in free and fair elections is crucial to a democracy.

At the beginning of the year, we as Young Democrats were quick to debate over which candidate we deemed appropriate for the presidential nomination. As young progressives, our nation's electoral system does not exactly always provide in the way we may wish. Now, we rally behind the Joe Biden and Kamala Harris ticket as their platform most closely aligns with ours. Biden's platform includes over 40 key issues, most notably for Young Democrats being healthcare, racial equity, crisis response to COVID-19, gun violence, climate change, LGBTQ+ equality, immigration, women's rights and education. We support the Biden campaign because of sufficiency with these issues.

We are appalled at Donald Trump's presidency, especially upon his handling of the pandemic. COVID-19 should not have been politicized in the way it has and the goal should be safety for all people in the United States. On President Trump's campaign website, it says the president wants to "eradicate COVID-19," yet over 220,000 people

within the United States have lost their lives to this pandemic. These lives will never be gained back, and we will mourn the losses to the country.

That being said, Biden has provided a detailed plan to destabilize COVID-19, provide economic support, and provide aid for essential workers and small businesses. First and foremost, Biden and the Democratic Party put trust in science, whether that be from COVID-19 to climate change. Biden plans to increase access to reliable testing, provide sufficient PPE, implement mask mandates and ensure transparency when dealing with the pandemic. As the pandemic has proven, the American healthcare system is damaged.

Biden supports access to affordable healthcare as healthcare is a human right. Biden intends to protect the Affordable Healthcare Act, which will be demolished under further Trump administration. Hopefully, the Biden administration will be able to implement their plan to protect the American people.

It is easy to get wrapped up in the excitement of the presidential election, but elections from the top to the bottom of the ballot are of utmost importance. Local politics influence us just as much, if not more than federal politics.

Locally, the A-State Young Democrats have held meetings with candidates such as those running for the Jonesboro mayoral race or the Arkansas State Legislature. Although the Democratic Party of Arkansas does not have candidates in this district's federal Congressional races, we as Young Democrats have been quick to proudly support and campaign for candidates statewide such as Celeste Williams, Joyce Elliot and William Hanson.

"The ability to participate in free and fair elections is crucial to a democracy."

As for the Arkansas House of Representatives, Jonesboro is split into multiple districts. Democratic candidates for this race include: Shawn Only (District 53), Jim Burton (District 58), and Reginald Prunty (District 59). The ballot also will include three initiatives which should be examined closely. Arkansas Issue 3, for example, would amend the Arkansas Constitution making it more difficult for petitioners in Arkansas to get issues on the ballot and propose laws. We oppose this issue.

Regardless of our political preference, we as the A-State Young Democrats encourage all to utilize their constitutional right to vote. Please educate yourself on candidates and issues before entering your polling location on Nov. 3.

NOAH HAYNES

CHAIR OF COLLEGE REPUBLICANS



Noah Haynes is a junior political science and economics major from Little Rock.

Every election is important, local, national or special. I just want people to vote. I will never discourage anyone from voting; even if their views are in direct contrast of mine.

However, as the chair of the Arkansas State College Republicans, it is my responsibility to facilitate a community of Republican college students and inform people why, after they've decided to vote in the first place, they should vote Republican.

The election in 2016 was very contentious, before, during and after it took place. Judging by the current political climate this coming election may prove to be even more contentious than the last. In this piece, I will show you some evidence to consider when you vote. I implore you to look deeper into what I provide, so you can draw your own opinions. Don't let anyone tell you how to vote.

If President Trump wins reelection, there will no doubt be backlash from the Democrats (especially if Vice President Biden wins the popular vote) calling for recounts and accusing of voter fraud. If the former vice president wins the election, the Republicans will respond in similar fashion. In addition, both the former vice president and Sen. Kamala Harris have avoided the question of court packing on multiple separate occasions. The only reason to deny a question concerning that subject would be that one is legitimately considering the options, and they know the public would be unhappy with the idea.

It simply doesn't seem wise to vote for an individual who has specifically stated that he will not tell anyone his plans concerning the U.S. Supreme Court, and who has said that they'll have to "know (his) opinion on court-packing when the election is over." This is asking voters to

play russian roulette, hoping that Biden agrees with them on the issue of court packing, but refusing to actually say what his opinion is.

Aside from the question of court packing, the length of Biden's tenure in office should be called into question. Biden became a United States senator in 1973, and held that position until he took the office of vice president in January 2009. Biden was vice president until he left office in 2017. This means that a candidate who is running on a platform of progress, change and equality has been working in government on a federal level for 44 years. In these 44 years, Biden voted yes on the Defense of Marriage act, which prohibited the recognition of same sex marriage. He was also one of the loudest voices against race-integration busing, an effort to bus students from further away into schools to create a racially diverse schooling environment.

Well, that's interesting, the "progressive" candidate for president in 2020 has a racist and homophobic voting record in the U.S. Senate.

"I want every person to vote how they want, otherwise our democracy will fail."

Trump, on the other hand, has led a United Nations effort to decriminalize homosexual intercourse globally, something no president has done in the past. (*Editor's Note: According to the Human Rights Campaign, this is false.*) President Trump also got the African American unemployment rate to the lowest it has been since World War II (before the COVID-19 crisis). (*Editor's Note: According to NPR, this is false.*) When comparing these statistics between the two main presidential candidates, it is clear who is the champion for progress and who is the bureaucratic bigot.

I want every person in the United States to vote, and I want every person to vote how they want, otherwise our democracy will fail. However, it is every voter's duty to do their research and deeply consider who they elect and the consequences that lie in that vote. It is simply irresponsible to just watch CNN or Fox and vote based on what you hear there. You must research. You must dig. You must discover the truth behind each candidate yourself. You may be surprised what you discover. But most importantly, you must vote.

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