

She was an Election Worker

Overview

Whether it's being greeted with a warm smile when you first walk into the building or being assisted by a friendly volunteer, the people who are always there to help you when you head into to vote are election workers, otherwise known as poll workers. Poll workers are an essential part of the voting experience, they do much more than just hand ballots and monitor voters. They also ensure that your voting experience is easy and efficient, that you know how to use the technology that might be there, as well as provide basic customer service. There's a lot to being a poll worker, and during a time like this, it's imperative that more and more people apply to be one!

What do poll workers do?

There are a variety of roles to fulfill as a poll worker which means that each role will be assigned with a different responsibility, but all of them have an end goal of assisting people and making Election Day run smoothly. These roles usually include:

- **Equipment Assistant:** These poll workers are usually assigned with the task of helping voters with technology, particularly the touch screen voting machines installed there.
- **Provisional/Transfer Assistant:** This role usually focuses on helping those who have questions about their vote eligibility. Poll Workers who have this position must have adequate typing skills and as well as customer service skills.
- **Party Judge:** This group of poll workers work closely with the chief judge and sign important documents. Every precinct has a Republican judge and a Democratic judge that are either appointed or recommended to the position.
- **Chief Judge:** The Chief Judge is the highest position one can have as an Election worker. They are in charge of handling Election Day activities, assigning duties as well as delivering returns to the Board of Election office by the end of the day.

Why are they important?

Due to the ongoing pandemic, older age groups are at high risk of contracting the virus. This means that interacting with large groups of others on Election Day isn't ideal for many who sign up to be poll workers.

According to the North Carolina State Board of Elections, the average poll worker is around the age of 70. So, to solve the potential problem with a shortage in this year's poll workers, the board is encouraging young people, who are less likely to contract Covid-19, to step up and fill these positions.

Poll Workers are essential to ensuring an election is kept fair and efficient. They also help strengthen our democracy. Without them, long lines tend to form which means voter turnout decreases.

The impact of poll workers:

Poll Workers have always been an incredibly vital part to making the process of voting easy and efficient. If you're interested in increasing your participation in civic responsibility, becoming a poll worker is a great way to begin! There's lots to do once you acquire the role, but the experience is quite fulfilling and it has many benefits.

If you'd like to read more about what a poll worker is or learn more about the experience, tune in for a later article featuring poll workers in the Charlotte area! This article will interview Black female poll workers in the area and will be featured on the Charlotte Women's Movement article! Graphics will be made later this week on how to access the website as well as the article.

Let's celebrate them!

Now more than ever, more and more people are realizing the unnoticed, and sometimes even heroic, efforts of poll workers. Taking time out of your day to assist others is something that many of us aren't so willing to do but because these people sacrifice their time, more people are able to vote easily and more efficiently.

Since Election Week is so near, it may be almost impossible for you to apply to become a Poll Worker now. We suggest that you keep this in mind for the next upcoming recruitment! Learn more about them and let this be something that you add to your list of things you can do in order to become more active in your community.

And remember poll workers can be anyone, they can be your old elementary school teacher, a close relative of yours, or even your next-door neighbor. Make sure to thank and commend them for their efforts. You can even ask them about their experience as a poll worker if they're free to do so!

There is so much that goes behind the scenes of such huge events like Election Day. That is why it's so important to acknowledge these people and learn more

about them. Continue to educate yourselves and continue to keep your eyes out for those behind-the-scenes helpers!

Sources used:

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