



**SCHOLARS**  
STRATEGY NETWORK

## Virginia - Valley Votes Project

DECEMBER 2, 2022

**Project Objective:** Focusing on the Shenandoah Valley area the project launched a series of voter engagement efforts including a speaker series, updated and interactive website, and voter registration tabling events on college campuses and in the local community.



### Valley Votes Project Website

Visit the project website, Valley Votes Project, [here](#). The website features resources to understand voting, information on how to request an absentee ballot, photos of events this project has hosted, and more.

### Speaker Series



## **The Valley Votes Securely**

Votes securely and learn how elections are secured in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, and the United States more generally.

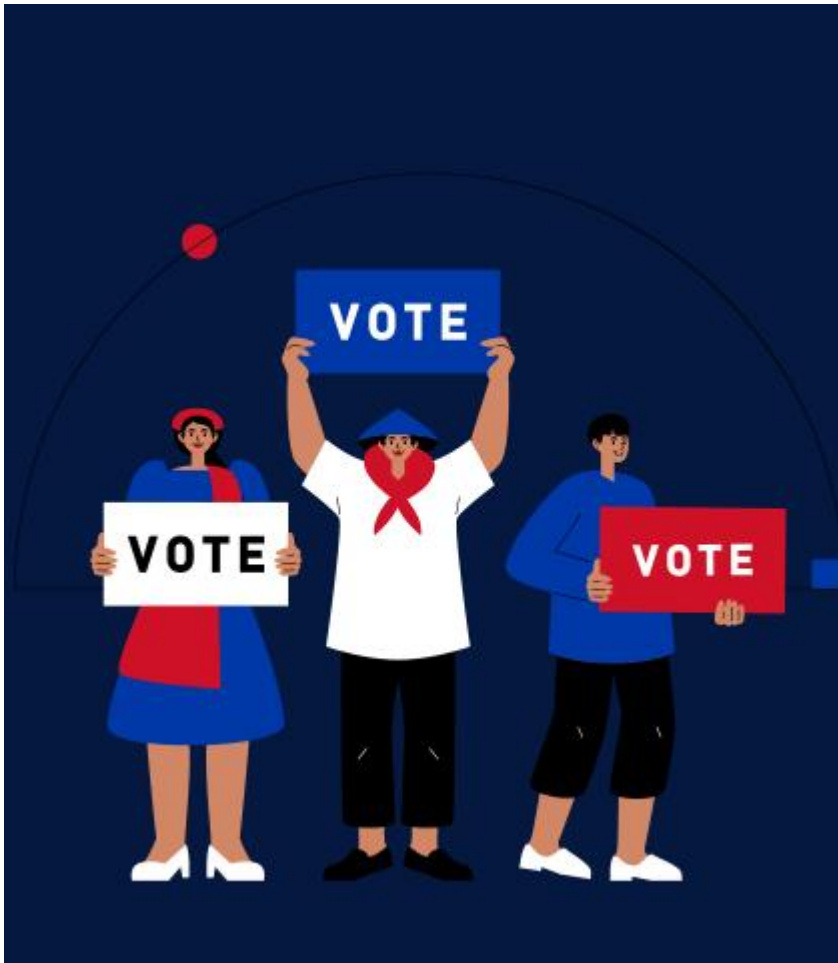
[Watch now](#)



## **The Valley Votes Confidently**

Vote confidently by listening to this discussion with guest speaker Judd Choate, Colorado Director of Elections.

[Watch now](#)



### **The Valley Votes Enthusiastically**

Vote enthusiastically after watching this discussion on the importance of voting with local elected officials.

[Watch now](#)



### **The Valley Votes Consistently**

Vote consistently and learn how we can improve elections/outreach to build trust and improve turn-out.

[Watch now](#)



### **The Valley Votes Project**

Learn more about the Valley Votes Project and how to prepare for the 2023 elections.

[Watch now](#)



## Media Coverage

### [WMRA: Improving trust in Virginia's elections](#)

The Valley Votes Project has been hard at work this fall reaching out to voters through a variety of voter registration drives, voter educational materials and speaker roundtables.



## **WHSV: Bridgewater political science professor educating students, community on importance of voting**

Professor [Bobbi G. Gentry](#) is educating students at Bridgewater College and the community at large about building trust and understanding of the election process.



## **WHSV: Free event to boost trust in elections**

The Valley Votes Project is hosting a free event -- the Valley Votes Confidently -- open to the public on how perceptions of elections can impact voters. The event will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 11, at 6 p.m. at Blue Ridge Community College.



### [WHSV: Valley Votes Project trust in elections preview](#)

WHSV speaks with [Benjamin Blankenship](#) on The Valley Votes Project's mission, upcoming events, and more.



### [James Madison University: JMU expert can speak on trust in elections](#)

[Ben Blankenship](#), a psychology professor at James Madison University, is one of the organizers of the series hosted by the Valley Votes Project. Blankenship is available to speak about the series as well as his research that focuses on trust and different components of society, including trust in elections and trust in

government.



## [Bridgewater College: BC Professor Awarded Two Grants to Enhance Voter Education and Participation](#)

[Dr. Bobbi Gentry](#), Associate Professor of Political Science at Bridgewater College, is the recipient of two different grants to strengthen voter education and participation.



## **Chapter Spotlight: Virginia SSN Builds Trust in Elections at Local Level**

When the Scholars Strategy Network announced a new grant opportunity to fund projects meant to increase trust and participation in elections, [Virginia SSN](#) chapter leaders [Bobbi Gentry](#) and [Benjamin Blankenship](#) immediately knew they wanted to apply.

### **Project Leaders**

#### **BENJAMIN T. BLANKENSHIP**

James Madison University



Blankenship is a co-leader of the Virginia SSN chapter. Blankenship's research focuses on the role of identity and stereotypes on the political engagement, belonging, and well-being of marginalized groups, specifically focusing on groups with concealable identities.

#### **BOBBI G. GENTRY**

Middle Georgia State University



Gentry is a co-leader of the Virginia SSN chapter. Gentry is a scholar of teaching and learning who focuses on improving student engagement in the classroom through simulations, policy problem/solution proposals, and research projects. She is also a youth voting scholar and does extensive research in political identity.