

# WASHINGTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS

## What to Expect When Running for Office in Washington County

### **Campaign Timeline.**

Create and Stick to a detailed calendar. Start with the election date and work backwards to plan your media efforts, raising money, canvassing, phone banking, attending community/social events, GOTV, filing dates, etc.

It is imperative that a successful candidate attend as many community functions as possible to gain campaign visibility and to push your message. You will want to meet as many voters as possible and community events are a great way to do this.

### **Budget Planning and Fundraising.**

Be realistic on your monetary goals and how to achieve them. Budget what your target goal is and what it will cost to get there. Don't be afraid to ask FAMILY and FRIENDS to donate money and also ask them to make personal calls to their contacts for contributions as well. Ask for donations at every public event, every personal interaction, every opportunity.

*Call time, call time, call time.* A voter is more likely to buy into your campaign if YOU are the one making the ask. Designate at least an hour (preferably more) every day for fundraising calls. Develop a script if that makes you more comfortable...be sincere but also be persistent.

### **Canvassing and Phone Banking.**

Voter contact is a crucial part of every campaign and should be executed every day up to Election Day. Canvassing and phone banks are two important means of contacting your voters. While canvassing allows your campaign to put a face to the candidate, phone banking allows you to reach more voters in a short amount of time. The best times for both activities is between 4:30-8:00pm (or until dark when canvassing) on week days and afternoons on weekends. A strong GOTV plan should be in place for the weeks prior to Election Day so that your volunteers can ramp up the calls and knocking.

### **Image.**

Know your district and the key issues there. Be prepared to talk about these issues at any moment as people will ask for your stance and expect you to have an answer as their potential representative. Stay away from national issues.

*Public speaking-* Be prepared to tell your story. People want to know what you stand for and where you came from. Be sincere and approachable. Expect to be speaking in public A LOT. Know your important

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issues and don't let your opponent distract you from the topic at hand if there is debate. Work on the following areas:

- Tone- be clear and direct with your responses
- Message- speak to the important topics for your constituency and your campaign
- Eye contact/body language- confidence is key!
- Appearance- represent yourself and your campaign with the appropriate attire

## **Utilization of VAN and Social Media.**

VAN is a voter targeting tool that will help you contact important voters efficiently and decrease the time you spend on nonvoters or voters who historically would not vote for you as a candidate. A data driven campaign is key for winning in today's races and you will be at a large disadvantage if your campaign does not utilize this tool.

Your campaign should also have a quality Website, Facebook page and Twitter account for pushing out your message and also invite voters to your campaign events. YouTube and Instagram are also platforms that candidates use, if you are comfortable with social media. Be aware of the things you release through these outlets...people are watching and can use your words against you if given the **chance.**

## **Media.**

Create close relationship with your media contacts. Earned media (press coming to event; conducting interview via yourself, volunteers or other members of your campaign) is a great way to get free publicity for your campaign.

## **Additional Information.**

This formula can give you a good idea of how large your voting universe is:

$(\% \text{ Turnout in Last 3 Similar Elections}) \times (\text{Current Number of Registered Voters}) = \text{Projected Turnout}$

$(\text{Projected Turnout}) / 2 + 1 = \text{Win Number}$

$(\text{Projected Turnout}) \times .52 = \text{Vote Goal}$