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(Music)

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: Hello everyone. Welcome to day 2 of speech matters. Charting the course for campus expression and engagement. I'm Michelle Deutchman and I am the executive director of the national center for free speech and civic engage. If you were here yesterday welcome back. If you are joining us today happy to have you. All of yesterday's sessions are recorded and will be available next week on the center's website. Realtime caption are available in our zoom conference click on the closed caption button and collect show subtitles to view captions.

Yesterday the theme was truth and information and public health online, news media and in the classroom. Today we are going to be looking at a different thread. And that is how to use one's voice on campus to effectuate change. It seems fitting we should be delving into this issue today in light of yesterday's verdict in the case of George Floyd's murder. Last Summer's response are were the most significant. Nearly a year later whether the issue is police reform or the rights of transgender students activists work to achieve systemic change. This morning we will be hearing from 5 inspiring student leaders. All of whom are doing incredible work across the UC system and despite a year of empty quads and few in campus gatherings they are active and a wide range of issues.

Aidan Arasasingham, president of the UC student association is going to share thoughts and the student advocacy and activism as well as introduce you to our first panelist speakers. The UC student association is the official of over 285,000 UC students at the university state and federal levels. S focussed on advanced and prostudent affordability and equity policies that support UC marginalized populations. He serves and has serves and served on the boards of the associated students UCLA, west side young democrats and the Irvine unified school district. He is a lifelong Californian and is is a senior at UCLA major ago global studies with minors why urban and

regional studies and art activity. Aidan, I am pleased to welcome you to SpeechMatters.

AIDAN ARASASINGHAM: Thank you Michelle and so great to join all of you here today virtually. Good morning I'm Aidan Arasasingham and it's my pleasure to serve as the president of the UC student association. As Michelle noted the UC student association is the official voice of the over 285,000 students who call UC home. For 50 years we have fought to improve the wall you the of the UC education. If we think 50 years back it's a similar moment we are in today. 50 years ago thousands of lives were lost to a war as preventable as this pandemic. Millions took to the streets at communities of color led the fights for civil rights and racial justice. And UC students across the state organized for an education guaranteeing free thought, the and affordable fees.

It's through these movements of free speech and civic engagement 2 generations ago many views on the role of students and the university were shaped. Responding to the unprecedented level of the crease that we have faced in this past year students are again leading the charge to reenvision the role of students and the university for the next century ahead.

One of the greatest joys of being president of the UC student association is being able to engage with student organizing across California, and the nation. And over the past 13 months of the pandemic even in the face of the challenges incompetent I've been impressed to see 3 trends that are optimistic.

First is the rise in digital organizing and engagement. In the absence of in person tactics for change making the organizing arena shifted on line and students wielded technology in new and innovative ways to speak and to be heard. Petitions phone banks actions and protest that is might have been a fixture of in person campus life you've observed before are occurring and organized more than ever online right now. Meeting a new generation of students where they're at in the digital landscape.

Second the contextualization of ... remarkable and in thinking boulder students are right now thinking older. For those of you in if university leadership many of the demands that you are hearing from students on campus relating to policing basic needs and students services may have slogans and tack technician but the tenets of many demands are rooted in older ideas of the role of the university and state. In funding and guaranteeing safety nets equity and opportunity.

Finally the explosion of our campus communities from being concentrated on site to being across the world has allowed students to better engage with each other across time and space in new ways we haven't done before. Students are more effectively communicating sharing best practice artists and building solidarity and with counterparts nation wide in other universities and communities outside the confines of our institution. As students continue to place themselves within the broader global community calls for UC to exercise activism and leadership on the global stage on issues of policing, immigration. Investments. Ethical labor. Climate change. Equity and student support will only grow. I'm excited we have 4 incredible student leaders here with us today who have lived, led and learned during this unprecedented time. And who can speak to the evolution of student organizing at UC. It's my pleasure to introduce them. Rafael is a Ph.D in English and a labor organizer with UAW2865 who is active in organizing for housing justice, international student rights and racial justice.

Syreeta Nolan is an undergrad human health graduate that shares TS chairs the UC disability at who can committee and advocates on issues of disability and health and their intersections.

Naomi Waters under AfricanAmerican student at UC rifer side chairs the UC student racial justice now committee and is a leader on campus safety issues at both the UC and CSU state wide. And, Essence Wynter is... lead for the black student union demands team helping to create the office of black student development at UC Santa Barbara. And finally moderating the panel is Emerson Sykes a UC center fellow last year and currently a staff attorney at the American ACLU where he focuses on first amendment and free speech protections. Over to you Emerson.

EMERSON SYKES: Thanks Aidan. It is, pleasure to moderate. I'm litigator but my favorite part of my job is getting to work with student activists such as the panelists we have today. So I think you know there's no need for us to explain to this audience why it's important to think about student activism. But I think I'm really looking forward to you all hearing from these folks the stories of their particular activism and what they've been able to achieve and how. Without further ado I want to dive in and start with Essence. Essence Winter is from UC Santa Barbara working on as on behalf of the black student union and they have achieved amazing success.

When we were discussing Essence's work I was blown

away but the things they have achieved but also the fact that they trace their roots all the way back to 1968 as Aidan was saying you know we think of the sort of student speech free speech on campus as starting in the late 60's and Essence's work can be directly linked to ha era as well. So I want to hear from you Essence a little bit how you've been able to achieve so much on your campus, but also with the reality check that use a decades long effort that's finalli...

ESSENCE WYNTER: I think that the first thing that I think about is I always teach people who go into the work that we do to learn the systems in which they AIM to tear down. Learning how the systems operate you're understanding why people feel they should exist or why they should run the way they do and then you kind of rewire that thinking. So a large part of our work is getting students on hiring committees.

So in the university setting, a lot of hiring committees they don't have students, which is odd considering many of the people you're hiring work directly with students on a daytoday basis. On top of the fact that for our work especially these are students demanded positions, we have student demanded psychologists. We have student demanded faculty. Postdocs. Chairs a lot of these positions we demanded in toward get black faculty and staff on campus and that goes all the way back to 1968 when they demanded a black studies department. ... so there is a lot of student activism and yet universities still don't think let me put students on these committees so that they can have an input so that I don't even it's just like they don't think to really put students at the forefront. This is supposed to be a student center entity. And yet we have a lot of nonstudents trying to think for us or trying to give trying to guess what our feelings about us are when they can simply ask us.

We are trying to rewire that thinking within the diversity system to put students at the forefront and really put students in these positions that are allowing them to take their life experience. Like I've learned so much about HR processes, and learned so much about the checks and balances that go with specifically within the UC system, but understanding that is what I really try to push as well as understanding your history, I think the understanding the history of the... has allowed us to take on the political capital that has come with that.

EMERSON SYKES: That's a fascinating introduction. I one of the things that struck me is that there has been these

demands going back decades and continue to be but a lot of them have been met. You've achieved success. A lot of the demands have been met and one is the office of black student development which as you've told now has its own building. Can you tell me a little bit more about the office of black student development, which I'm sure doesn't exist on many campuses? How it came to be, and what you think it adds to your community.

ESSENCE WYNTER: So think the way we try to look, we've essentially done an audit on UC Santa Barbara and we have assessed how the university lacks in helping black students not only in retention but as far as recruitment also, and the office of black student development consists of 8 positions. A director. Assistant director. A recruitment and retention specialist. Academic achievement councillors, 2 of those. And advocacy counselor, and a student life coordinator. So we are trying to make sure that the black student success is evaluated in a holistic format, and that office is a commitment of over a million dollars annually by the chancellor's office.

So we are making sure that the university in itself is taking accountability for black student success, and we demanded for a building because it needs to have its own space. It's an office excuse me it needs to not be pushed into these little cubicles to consider they can't really get students in there and they can't really socialize. I feel like a large part of these departments is a lack of socialization with students so there's disconnect. So making sure that these positions are connecting with students on various levels and not just within the scope of their job titles. .

Our assistant director and director, they go to programs that the BSU, they go to BSU meetings. There's just we want the faculty and staff to take an active part in student lives so that there is a greater connection between students and faculty, and to bridge that divide between the it two

EMERSON SYKES: That is fascinating. I appreciate that. We will come back you to and feel free to jump in but that's a good sequeway talking about the importance of physical space and campus. Wish we could all be on campus. . In the fall we will all be back but picking up and the theme of the importance of having physical space, in terms of building community I wonder in Naomi I can turn to you because you have a fascinating story of your activation. You're at UC Riverside but started off at Humboldt state and you described it as a hostile racial environmental at

Humboldt state and you have been active in trying to help other folks who are in rural on other racially hostile campuses within the UC system. And within the Cal State system but at the same time you've also or not at the same time but you've also been working on defunding campus police work. So this sort of dual track of trying to increase safety for black students while also trying to decrease policing is really I think speaks to the moment that we're currently in. I wonder if you can tell us a little bit about your journey from Humboldt state to UC Riverside and how you try to sort of balance working towards safety while also trying to decrease policing.

NAOMI WATERS: Absolutely. Thank you. So, previously I'm Humboldt university I was president of the black student union there and while on campus I was able to connect with coalition groups outside the black student union as well to organize around student safety and retention. But it's it's through that process that I really learned, and much like Essence, that we have to learn the system and become educated and accustomed to the language in it order to situate your own experience within that system properly. .

As we move to... through the scope of abolition that still stands. Previously at Humboldt my own personal experience being on the receiving end of racial taunts and hatred the stances I took on the campus and it's something that when I talk about folks often ask what do you mean Humboldt. Is that in the south? No Humboldt state is a CSU it's part of California State University system. And many folks can't wrap there mind around that somewhere in this state there's place that is overtly hostile to folks of color, and other marginalized communities.

So with that, I began organizing, assisting organizing with a student's mother who was stabbed to death by a white supremacist after campus after my departure there and it happened in 2017. With that experience I began to dive into other issues of racial I wouldn't say unrest, but unease at certain campuses and began to notice a path then aer they happen mostly at rural campuses. Not to say that rural campuses are special or different from the urban counterparts but there's something to be said that at these communities and spaces there's a certain type of a certain type of view, a certain type of culture rather that is allows it to foster at these campuses and I could say the same certainly for campuses within the UC system as well.

The campus of UC Santa Cruz is rural. And it is we are looking at defunding the police and campus safety

within the UC system it's become completely obvious that at UC Santa Cruz that they have a deeply entrenched issue with racial hostility on and around this campus. There are several Ku Klux Klan... around that university and within that city excuse me. So with that trying to pair these things there's obvious link. To me as a student of color between those 2 things right. So how do we develop a model of student safety that is effective, that centers students needs right, and allows for a more holistic view.

Yeah, excuse me more holistic view. So that's certainly something that we've been working towards. I've been working forwards under my current position and I hope to continue that fight

EMERSON SYKES: I appreciate you sharing that. That really difficult story you know. Especially the person who lost their life. And really brings you know the tangible impact. You talk about the first amendment. You talk about free speech much right to protest all those things but people including yourself, you know put their bodies and their lives on the line. I think that's an important reminder. I wonder if if you can just say a little bit more about your particular campaign around defunding the police. What are the demands? What's the status? And what do you hope to achieve at the end.

NAOMI WATERS: So currently our demands are to defund the police, to develop a more holistic view of campus state of. SAOUNT safety and the needs of students... needs rather and to develop or promote racial equity within this right. So definitely issues around excuse me issues around the homelessness food and security are at the top of the list so we through my research, and through what UCSA has done we have been looking at specific incidents and instances within the UC system where there is very little need for apologies for UCPD to implement use of force, that it's more it's it's in the interests of students that officers shouldn't be, be the first to be called when students are having mental health crisis that caps are something that we should well fund and most caps centers on campuses are not really severely underfunded but severely under staffed so as we move to continue to look at specific incidents, specific ways in which we can empower students, empower student communities, and to center truly center student safety it does that view does not rest on having a more entrenched police presence. We believe in the disarmament and the district band many of UCPD.

EMERSON SYKES: And where does the campaign stand at this time.

NAOMI WATERS: Currently we are in talks we will be continuing talks about folks within the UC office of the president to go over some of these policy recommendations that UCGPC, UCSA, UC council presence put forth on the the suppose numb of March 24. This is something I'm very much looking forward to how and which we could all come together on this front and really deliver on the promises that we know the UC can, can bring to fruition.

EMERSON SYKES: I appreciate you sharing that and I mean you obviously noteworthy how the UC system and each campus is in many many ways a microcosm of the debates that we're having at national level, and I always try to remind folks not living on campuses as you are, you know that campus are such special places because they are the students' home, workplace, you know, hang out spot, dining area, restaurant everything is on campus. So to the extent that you can have such a direct impact by reinvesting away from having you know armed police officers, whether they're on or after campus responding and reinvesting that that community level support is important.

SYREETA NOLAN: If I may jump in because I feel when we are talk doing defunding UCPD and how we approach mental health emergencies we are not just talking about racial justice we are also talking about disability justice without talking about disability justice. We talk about all the black people who have been killed like George Floyd, and we don't talk about disabilities that might have been underlying those things. We don't talk about it because it's like disability is a discourse that we've never been allowed to have. Disability is disabled with it's like disallowed from being a part of our UC community.

We don't have centers broadly. We don't have people that speak for us broadly. I'm the first within the university of California student association as underrepresented student officer to choose to represent disabled students. Because it intersects all of us T affects all of us. So when we do defund the police. When we do have caps providing better support for disabled students with mental health conditions, because caps never centers that either that mental health is a disability. And works to destigmatize it. Create spaces for peer support. We don't have that. Much but by creating these spaces for defunding the police and funding the healthier view of mental health and disability. We truly can make the UC system more accessible, more inclusive, and more holistically safe for all

EMERSON SYKES: I totally appreciate that and that's where

I was hoping to go next. I think Syreeta you're at UC San Diego which is a UC campus where I spent a little time I'm sorry we didn't cross paths when I was there but you've described yourself as a nontraditional student in a variety of ways right. And I think intersectionality you mentioned it it's buzz word but it really I think describes what you're trying to talk about. You're talking about you know the ways in which certain types of identities you know, there are varieties of challenges of different kind of identities but some are more prominently understood or more widespread in the discourse than others and disability I hope maybe you can correct me if I'm wrong it seems as if disability is getting a little bit more prominent to people are starting to recognize a tiny bit more how much erasure there is from physical spaces going back to what we were talking about earlier in terms of actual physical access. Access to zoom meetings, access to all sorts of places or virtual places but there's all sorts of other way that is disability and folks who have disabilities have erased on are deprioritized.

I wonder if you can talk a little more about the specific kinds of issues that you've taken up in your own activism?

SYREETA NOLAN: So definitely. Some of the issues I really have taken up is decensuring students with disabilities. When we use terms like people with disabilities it's like SAIL saying I'm a student with blackness. It's decentering an aspect of personality of who we are. It's like UC saying okay you're students. Disability we're just going to put that over here. You can go get accommodations and accessibility. But there's nothing else. We deny you as who you are. Disability pronouns where mine with a disabled student, an in visibly disabled woman and neurodivergent I find that there's no respect for disability pronouns where gender pronouns have so much respect. We don't have spaces for disabled students to come together and support each other, like at UCSD we have a phenomenal office as well of disability consulting and councillor for disabled faculty and staff. So while we've got disabled students over here in the office of students with disabilities and the other and we have faculty and staff in another office. We're siloed apart. From each other. I have disabled mentors because I cofounded disabled in the higher ED on twitter and we now like 6500 followers and I've been able to find mentors that way but aren't I paying for an education in the UC? Why can't I have mentorship here? So we've been tackling issues like

creating a welcoming campus culture. Looking at basic needs because my basic needs being gluten free with difficult. If I go food pantry and they ask me what's gluten answer I'm like I just don't feel safe with you any more. I have not used the food pantry in a long time.

It's all everything that's happened culturally is just made me feel so much more alone during the pandemic to hear nothing. In terms of discourse of the pandemic which affects disabled students even more. Some of us have been literal shut ins for the past year just because we're high risk. And I don't think that's appreciated enough throughout the system. And I don't think we're seen enough as a community that needs each other. So that's why I have the disability ad hoc next step is nonprofit founding owe we're going to be transitions to jade justice advocacy and disability education and 3 of the main components are disabled students associations. Disabled staff and faculty associations and disabled alumni associations will have cross with each other and the system wide chapters so that it kind of has the same power of being aligned directly with the UCSA so we keep that alignment but we expand that alignment too to be table able to celebrate and honor our disabled staff and faculty and alumni and find what challenges and opportunities they have, and really create mentoring opportunities for students and so much more.

EMERSON SYKES: That's fascinating. I appreciate the details that have and underscoring disability as an identity in and of itself. Not a particular characteristic but a core identity. And the point you made about the pandemic is interesting right. I've heard I've talked to folks who work on disability rights and sort of cutting both ways right because in some ways you know people are like oh now we're all in some sense disabled in some way, and we sort of understand what it's like to not be able to go where you want to go, or participate fully in the way that you might want to.

And some folks said oh maybe this will actually be a moment that we can have for access and more sensitivity around maybe we can have you know virtual options online options for folks who aren't able to be there in person but at the same time so we don't get too rosy the pandemic has been especially difficult for the disability. I wonder if if you can say another word about not just the experience of the pandemic but what you foresee as the legacy of the pandemic with respect to disable students

SYREETA NOLAN: Oh the legacy.

EMERSON SYKES: It's a tough question.

SYREETA NOLAN: Oh no I'm excited for this. So within the pandemic we have hey some of the greatest blessings happen. Like so Crip Camp is actually this movie I think it started in March of 2020. When it came out, and it's now Oscar nominated. So this is a first time in the Oscars we have 3 movies representing disabilities accurately. I don't remember the name of the other 2 at the moment but we've seen this moment where yes, we have this widespread disability simulation. Where we do understand what it's like to not just like walk outside, but you have to think about your mask. How many people you're going to be around and indoor, outdoor. Is this a safe thing? Should I be doing this or not? .

Which is a lot of what it is to be a disabled person. But also, I think it's more about trying to district allow the stigma from being able to say that we are we identify as disabled because I think not talking about disability we real realize it as a bad thing within the medical model and I hope one of the standing legacies of the pandemic is that we recognize and accept the social model of disability that if it we have disability within our DEI statements that we truly like take a moment, and look at all the groups across that DEI statement, black students, women, LGBTQ versus disability community and ask yourself, one question as an administer, as a student, as faculty staff. Do you have as many programmes for disabled students staff and faculty as you do for every other group represented? Are you proud of the statistics of disabled students that are within your UC? Do you celebrate them? Do you stand with them? Are you there to say ... do you allow teaches to tear down the students. I have a calculus teacher I'm too afraid to talk to. I'm like can you talk to them. Just fix this. Do you allow your students to live in fear? So how much do you really support your disability community.

And really just taking that step back to think about our experience, and to realize that the disability community has expanded during the pandemic, with broad spread like maybe you've been newly diagnosed with a form of neuro divergence that just became worse in a way that it was diagnosed during the pandemic. Like for me I was diagnosed with ADHD in February. Maybe you have new depression. New anxiety. And any mental health condition is a disability. And I don't think that mental health health providers will say that because they are in the medical model. It has to be disabling you to a point where you can get social security and all of those benefits but no, even taking medication and having to structure your

days around remembering it makes it something that changes your life.

And there are the things that you look hard enough in every disability we have in my fibromyalgia has taught me to slow down and even with COVID... allowing disabled student staff and faculty to be there for each other would be one of the best legacies of COVID

EMERSON SYKES: Even the most progressive institutions have to recognize that disability as an identity and as a set of concerns is really been overlooked even if it's really progressive spaces. So I appreciate all that. And I want to move

[Voices speaking simultaneously] go ahead.

ESSENCE WYNTER: I wanted to just add a little bit because I was listening to everything that Syreeta was saying and I really agree with everything, and I really just wanted to also mention the lack of understanding within faculty. I think that especially when it comes to the petitioning process to get out of classes to withdraw from classes, I think there is a misconception that you have to have failed all your classes in order for your disability to have affected you enough to get out of a class, and I think that not only is there a misunderstanding of disabilities within faculty but I don't think faculty know when to bring in disability experts or people who can speak on those disabilities in order to help students if if you're in the withdrawal process. I can speak at UC Santa Barbara a lot of times it's like oh well if you didn't fill all your classes it's all right, and I think there's misconception that you have to have completely been dead essentially, in order to not be able to go to class. And I don't think it's fair or right, and I think we should really be working on that so I really applaud everything that she's been doing.

EMERSON SYKES: No thanks Essence that's an incredible point in terms of you know, redefining the borders of disabilities as well. Sort of understanding where we we think they are. Where they might already be and where we all are ourselves in terms of disability.

I want to shift because we have so many I was teasing Michelle that we have 50 minutes with these incredible activists so I don't want to I want to get to Rafael because you also have quite a lot to add to this conversation. I wish we had 3 hours for this panel but Rafael. You are the president elect of the grad student union right? So I want to hear from you about you have been deeply involved in the COLA movement within the union

as well as a variety of other issues and you're assuming sort of this top leadership role you know this in a few days.

And I want you to speak a little bit to the specific role of a union in pushing for progress on a campus. We've heard about individual and organizational activism from from the other panelists and I wonder if you can just add the dimension ever the union. What is the special role of the union on campus and what do you hope to achieve as president elect

RAFAEL JAIME: Well yeah, so pleasure to be here and join all these incredible people. Yeah, so UW2065 it's a union of leaders so about the sense graduate students but also undergraduate students. And, yeah, I think you know the main goal I think is to make sure that the university of California is actually true and accessible to all our working students, and if we improper the working conditions of those that work at the university of California we can improve the learning conditions of students at the university of California and again the goal is to make the university much more accessible.

I think I want to touch on a little some of the things that people have brought out about the pandemic. How it's impacted us all in different ways and I think one particular case or I think we can sort of see where the work of the union lies is with international students. International students have been you know they have been impact today a greater degree than a lot of other students during the pandemic. International students first of all after going through the years of the trump administration and all those policies have been you know very devastating to international students, during the pandemic things have actually also became worse. Their independent [inaudible] trying to institute this would be eventually I think we called the international student ban basically trying to attempt well it's attempt to reopen the universities, and other businesses from from a place of role this international students could in the stay in the country if they were only taking online classes and of course this jeopardized the health of the international students trying to use international students as way to again reopen businesses.

In UAW2065 along with a lot of our graduate students and other unions across the country, organized to push back against this. We had first of all we had a giant meeting for international students to learn about rights and I think it was attended by well over 1000, like well over

1000 international students where they would learn about the rights during this unprecedented time. We also organized a number of different actions at across the UC but also with other unions and other states. And ice pushed back. We collaborated in filing lawsuits against the trump administration, and you know through a lot of collective action we're look able to reverse the ban. And I think you know this is I think what is the way that our union works. This is again through collective action we are 19000 workers across the UC and our power lies in our member shin. 19000 members who run the university. Who teach the most amount of who teach the overall amount of classes for students. The university doesn't have our labor the university can be run and again that is the source of the power.

As far as what is in because we have because there were so many workers at the university of California, there's also the university of California is one of the biggest employers in the state, you know we also have the ability to bring about change not just in the workplace but also across the state as a whole. . During the election. The 2020 elections UAW2065 was heavily involved in pushing for very progressive... such as prop 15 which would have brought in billions of dollars more for public education, it also pushed for... which would reverse the banana affirmative action. And a number of other things like that. Again because you know we have massive amount of workers. Which can be mobilized to take action for progressive change

EMERSON SYKES: That's really impressive. The breadth and depth of the work that. UAW is taking. You talked about the variety of tools you have. You're doing know your rights trainings. You're participating in litigation. Policy and legislative advocacy.

But maybe the things this makes the most headlines is when you take direct action right. When folks decide to strike or take other types of direct action so I wonder if you can just spend a couple of minutes on the decision with the COLA exam or even looking forward to future example. How do you decide which tool to use for a particular problem and when do you decide that you know you're going to use the big option which is to strike.

RAFAEL JAIME: That's always an ongoing conversation. We have to I think with anything we have to always think strategic China what kind of leverage do we have against our employer.

Is it something that people are tolling fight for?

And in order to get to that point it takes a lot of work. There isn't just one you know there isn't just a strike and everybody goes out there, and you know. Withholding labor is a risk action. You know we are one of the reasons why we've been so activated around housing issues is because we are precarious workers. We are low wage part time workers and want some of the most expensive rental markets in the country. If we withhold labor and wean get paid that means missing a rental payment because we are living pay check to pay check so in order to get the point where we can take that you know the most which is the ultimate action which is you know going on strike, it's always important to make sure you know to have conversations with the... build the kind of trust that will be allow us to take action together because it only works when you take when you all the majority of you the take action together to withhold labor and that crisis. That starts by meeting workers where they are on moving them to take collective action. Build thing networks of trust.

And again it's the hard work of organizing and suggest that we have to be constantly learning and relearning and moving towards. And it's hard work but it's ultimately what will achieve change in our workplaces
EMERSON SYKES: Inspired by your work and everybody on the panel. Anybody who thinks kids these days are switched off or don't understand what is at stake or are not sufficiently well engaged in the political and social system need to watch the record of this event. I mean, I think you all are so engaged and inspire me on a daily basis, and I want to now sort of plug back into sort of the broader debate around speech on campus. The first amendment you know. We are at the UC national center on speech and civic engagement, and you know the phrase free speech hasn't come up. We haven't been talking about free speech. We haven't been talking about the first amendment and I'm curious I'm a cards on the table I'm a very progressive free speech advocate. I believe in free speech because I believe it helps with social change. It's complicated but I'm curious for you all. You're clearly fired up. You're activists and you have passion and a strategy and a vision.

But I'm curious when you hear free speech does that seem like something that is reflecting what you do I mean free speech has been coopted as something that only existed for certain people expressing certain kinds of ideas and I wonder for you all who I would argue are models of what, why free speech is important I wonder how that

phrase resonates for you. Does it feel like it describes what you're doing or does it feel like the polar opposite of what you're doing.

SYREETA NOLAN: I just want to jump in. Free speech. Disabled students are not really engaged in a lot of processes. Like I noticed here at UCSD when we had the elections for student government that no one reached out proactively to office of students with disabilities or it doesn't seem like we are given the same rights to free speech. The same opportunities as other students, and there's not like we think of accessibility in accommodations in the classroom. Like we're trapped in a classroom and that's the only place well maybe buildings. We go into buildings. We go to classrooms. Disabled students are tall lie wanting to be involved completely so it it's kind of laughable to see how much disabled students are disengaged because they've been engaged with. When you look at Crip Camp you do see free speech and the civic engage: There's scene where they do it they take they drop their wheelchairs at the foot of the capital steps and crawl and it's just phenomenal to see how much they are willing po lay out on the line to really stand for the ADA being put in force.

But really the ADA is like a base it's like the foundation. We are supposed to be building on this foundation. And nothing has been built on this foundation within most student government toss really allow for a police department for disabled students. I'm really proud here at UCSD we did establish a disability justice commission. We are still work ongoing getting its mission vision and the officers who will be able to be a part of this office from year on into the future, but it's written in to AS now and it will be something that is continuously like looking for disabled students to engage.

So in that way I am proud to be here at UCSD. I do feel like my free speech is respected, and like here in the UCSA being able to speak to disabled student issues in different intersections like with the international students and everything that has been happening within the Asian community, being able to amplify disabled international students who may have additional challenges in the fall. But do we really think about these intersections.

Like will a voice of a disabled student be there with a future at UCSA. It's been so long and no one voiced for disabled students the way that I have. And the goal that is been sustainability. To make sure we sustain the

disabled student voice and speech within spaces of power. And not to lose what we've gained during the pandemic. So just one of those things again

EMERSON SYKES: I can only hope the way you describe sort of moving past not that accessibility and accommodations are unimportant. But moving past that to a more sophisticated and comprehensive political dialogue. I appreciate that. Anybody else wants to react to this sort of free speech and whether it feels like it reflects your work or not.

RAFAEL JAIME: Yeah totally. Just an anecdote I was on an organizing talk with a worker trying to get them to join their union. The UAW2065 and in an organizing represent would normally use I pose the question if you went to your department chair and asked them for a raise, or to change your working conditions what would you you know what do you think they would say? And I found this interesting because the person when I asked the question they said oh I would never dare even ask that. Because that professor, that my that chair the professor holds my entire future in their hands. If I district please them or if I do anything to district please them then there goes my degree. There goes my visa because this was an international student so I would never do that.

And you know of course it's I think sometimes the whole discussion about the speech centers too often on the individual but I think through our union and or points of mass collective action it's important I do think our work is very much related to speech because we need to be able to have the power to say those things without having to face repercussion, and when we have a numbers. When we have collective action we are able to amplify those voices and actually make them heard and, in fact, changed.

So yeah, and I think again it's through building relationships of trust that we are able to amplify the process of action to make free speech

EMERSON SYKES: The way that you free speech is so much about power right. And people powering, individual power. Institutional power. And the way you describe sort of the precariousness of the folks in your union and the very specific power dynamics that existing within academia is definitely a powerful point in terms of how it may be similar but it's unique and different from other types of employer/employee relationships much the professor men tee relationship is sort of. As Naomi do you want to jump in.
NAOMI WATERS: Yeah, I believe that in my work I feel like my free speech depends who I'm talking to. A lot of times

I've encountered tone policing. People don't really want to hear what you say. They just want to pay attention to how you said it and it kind of distracts away from what I've said. And I think that I've met a lot of administrators that I can talk candidly with and I can tell them this makes no sense and other administrators who they are kind of on a power trip. They're kind of like how dare you and it's frustrating because you're working towards a goal, and you're having to deal with eco,, and you're having to deal with people who feel like since they have Ph.Ds that what you say doesn't matter. Or how you feel doesn't matter.

And I feel like that's very common within the higher education system, and it's frustrating because we're paying all this money and all we're asking is to be considered as humans, as disabled people, as so many different intersections but your speech is you have to say it in the right way, you have to play kind of like a political mind game in toward to get what you need and it's frustrating

EMERSON SYKES: I appreciate that. And one the things it's particularly interesting to hear that because in some ways you've been so successful with your redemands and one thing I talk about is crafting demands. Some of which you know may be unlikely to be met but there still may be worthwhile demands to be met but you've had a lot of success achieving the demands and I think one thing for administrators is to not justice look at the demands themselves but to also always look at the underlying concerns and the place that these demands come from. And rather than policing the tone understand where the frustration of the rage all those feelings come from and trying to adjust the underlying issues and I think you have created a compelling model how to do that in a comprehensive way. Last word to you Naomi owe.

NAOMI WATERS: Certainly in the aspects of free speech and not only as you mentioned Essence tone policing but overall policing so like free speech and just the way in which language is used to subjugate folks so abolition is used like a dirty word. That's just a kneejerk reaction or old reaction to things that are happening in our camps or broader community so speech often becomes dangerous for some folks. This word or these words lends an avalanche of abuse and surveillance by the system.

Right. So these stakes are very high. Students often get singled out about the issues of policing and the power dynamic. Going back to something Syreeta said, Syreeta asked in her statement do students do are students allowed to live in fear? And for me the answer is

yes right. Students live in fear of the police. Police specifically on our very own campuses and in our larger communities, and as we remarked embark on the process of reenvisioning student safety on the campus it's important to understand where that fear comes from and from where it's placed. Right? .

Even going back to a little bit of like the history of racial abuse I experienced but also students experienced at the hands of police officers. One instance in particular I'd like to bring attention to is that an officer at UC Berkeley told a black student that she was lucky during a confrontation they had in 2019 that she was not shot because "it was part of UCBD training to shoot center of" and with that folks within UCPD specifically Berkeley, and another center played with this language right but this is nothing to play about. These are students' lives. We need to be consistent and straightforward with the things we say and how we approach these issues in the future.

EMERSON SYKES: Well thank you so much Naomi. Thank you Essence. Thank you, Syreeta. Thank you Rafael and also to the UC national center for bringing us together and especially thank you to the attendees. I wish we could look out and see your faces and have coffee and chat but thank you very much for this really inspiring conversation. Back to you Michelle.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: I'm just going to echo Emerson what you said is to thank our incredible activists not only for the work but for taking time from your very full lives to talk to everyone and share your experiences and your stories. I can speak for myself as incredibly inspired and I have no doubt that many other people are inspired by you. And may reach out to you going forward. And we will be distributing not only the recording but any resources that Emerson or any of our panelists have to share. It's very sad to have to end the panel. But again, I am deeply appreciative and I'm looking forward to continuing the conversation. Which we are going to do with 2 new panelists who will be joining us in a moment.

You know I think this really highlights the activism and advocacy are two of the principle ways that not just students but that campus stakeholders generally can utilize their first amendment rights at public universities like the University of California. Much just a few years ago many of you may remember UC was at the heart of what some called the campus free speech wars. Controversial speakers visited campuses the appearances were often greeted with

protesters media friends I and in some situations violence and property damage. Campus said significant sums of money in order to safeguard the speakers rights to have perspectives heard. It is out of these types of situations that former UC president founded the UC center for free speech and civic engagement and named 2 scholars to guide the center as a it grew and developed. Those 2 people are UCI chancellor Howard Gillman and, Erwin Chemerinsky. Chancellor Gillman was the 6th of the university Irvine in September 2014. He is an award winning scholar... and the Supreme Court and he holds faculty appointments in the school of law. The department of political science everybody the department of history and the department of criminology law and society. A native I have southern California chancellor Gillman grew up in north Hollywood and was a first generation college student. He earned bachelor masters and doctorate degrees. Erwin Chemerinsky became the 13th dean of Berkeley law when he joined. Prior to assuming this position from 2008 to 2017 he was the founding dean and distinguished professor of law and Raymond perk professor of first amendment law at university of California Irvine school of law with the joint appointment in political science. Almost 4 years ago this tag team published a highly regarded book free speech and campus which I recommend. A lot happened since that book was written. And before we jump newspaper a discussion about free speech on campus I would like to take a moment to poll the audience how they feel things evolved and campus in terms of the robust exchange of ideas. So you should see a question popup and it reads in your assessment has the ability to openly exchange different perspectives on campus improved in the last 4 years. Become worse in this the past 4 years or largely stayed the same please take a moment to vote so we can use these results as a way to particular off our discussion with the dean and the chancellor.

There you both are. Good morning. You can both unmute while we take a moment to see if the results are coming up and if not real just we can always here woo go. Okay so looks like little less than 20% feel it is an improved in the last 4 years. Overly 50% of folks added to' conference feel it's worse and then a little less than 30% feel like it's stayed the same. I think my first question for both of you is you know are these results surprising to you? Is it what you would have expected? ?

OTHER SPEAKER: Thank you Michelle.

CHANCELLOR GILLMAN: Thanks for your tremendous leadership

and everything you're doing on behalf of this center. You know it doesn't surprise me too much issues of speech on campus are very divisive. You can imagine people thinking things are getting worse but even from a variety of perspectives. Conservatives once these debates get pulled into the culture wars conservatives think it's worse but there's more liberal orthodoxy and others feel it's worse because some issues they feel passionate about you know are haven't been resolve everyday.

You could be someone to feels so strongly about how certain kinds of speech undermines a sense of safety on the campus or is inconsistent with creating a discriminatory a nondiscriminatory and inclusive campus environment and feel the campus isn't doing enough. So you know we are at a moment where fundamental questions of free speech divide us, it's so important therefore that this center continue to do that work, and, and deepen the conversation among people who you know have very strong points of view about what the correct boundaries of free speech and academic freedom are

ERWIN CHEMERINSKY: I agree with everything that Howard said. Thank you Michelle for the wonderful conference and thank you for all you do for the center.

I think in answering a question like that the most recent is inevitably the most salient much what's happened over the course of the last year? Many campuses including mine have been completely closed. We've been entirely online all year. When a campus is closed there can't be gatherings for speech or demonstrations. There can't be the energy that comes from people that are together. That's an inevitably a loss of speech. Any conversations are by electronic media and I think communication by electronic media especially social media is often coarser, often less developed in terms of the content and often people will say things that they'd never say in person so and so I think the last year has been one that's made us worse off with regard to speech, and that doesn't disagree with anything that Howard said in terms of why people from various perspectives might also perceive us as worse off or the same

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: Thank you. It's going to be hard to get the two of you to disagree about something that you base okay. I do want to jump into something more recent. Which is over the last year especially many chancellors and Deans and presidents of universities have used their own bully pull pits and voices to respond to events like the capital insurrection or recent spout of antiAsian violence.

You know both of you send messages after the... coupled with action and I guess my question for both of you are what are ways administrators can bridge the gap in messages and implementing meaningful and impactful policy changes.

ERWIN CHEMERINSKY: I think messages are very important, though they're not enough. Silence is a message in itself, and so I felt it very important quickly at the verdict yesterday to get out a message and a message that that tried to be is press all of the emotion that is people are likely feeling. The emotion that people felt in terms of relief. The emotion people felt in terms of sadness because of the tragic death of George Floyd.

The emotion people felt in terms of profound anger at continuing police violence ever the recognition in a for students staff and faculty of color all of this is much more personal. As Kamala Harris said yesterday one verdict isn't going to erase centuries of pain. I felt it important as a law school to express a message we have to continue to use this as the inspiration but even harder for justice against racism and policing and racism in society.

And after we see antiAsian violence. After the event last spring I also look today send out a message but I'm very conscious that's not enough. And so what we need to do is other things for us it was substantially increasing our courses that deal with issues of racism in society. Encouraging faculty in classes to spend much more time and issues with regard to antiblackness and racism. It's looking to create new mechanisms within the law school and special through to reach out to students and staff and faculty to hear concerns and see what they think we can best do

CHANCELLOR GILLMAN: We are part of an institution whose central mission is it use knowledge and teaching in order to understand and address the most important issues facing our community and the world, and you know that is the power of are a great public university. That's the expectation the public has in supporting us through the work that we do we will continue to make progress. There's not an issue facing the campus. Phasing our communities where the talent of dedicated students expert faculty engaging with community partners can't make a contribution. And so you know sometimes you know a statement might just seem like a statement when it comes to something so momentous as issues that arrows in the wake of George Floyd's murder that has to be a call to action in the same way that the pandemic was a called to action.

Right when we are confronting things that are

affecting fundamentally people's well being, their sense of justice. Their sense of whether institutions are operating in their interest, you have to mobilize every corner of the campus and sometimes that is kind of central initiatives. Sometimes that's simply empowering this great campus community to do the work they need to do to transform curriculum to initiate the kind of research and outreach that the issues call for.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: It wouldn't be a conference if I didn't speak one time on mute. So thank you.

I'll try at that again. Chancellor I'm going to start with you. To are this one there's certainly been an increased focus and how universities can be antiracism institutions in particular recognizing and responding to antiblackness. I know UCI has been a lead where the black thriving initiative which recognizes and responds to antiblackness as an extension threat to our mission as a public research university. I know some argue programs like these can compromise free speech rights. Maybe compromise academic freedom of faculty. How do you respond to concerns like that

CHANCELLOR GILLMAN: Than you for having, by the way those of you watching haven't had a chance to look at the UCI black thriving initiative I would be grateful if you follow up. We're very proud of the initiative not because there's handful of central activities but really a call to action that I think every corner of the campus responded to. You know more work has to be done but we can feel rear all taking responsibility as a collective institution to ensure that we are creating an environment on campus in which everyone can thrive and also addressing larger social issues.

You know it is always the case that if a campus leader speaks there may be people who disagree with what a leader says. I don't think the mere fact a campus is speaking should be interpreted as constraining other people. We have rights to speak especially on matters central to the university's mission. It's also the case sometimes when I don't speak people think I'm threatening their well being and undermining free speech because they feel as though they're particularly interests need to be validated by university leaders. So you can get accused of structuring the conversation wrongly whether you speak or not. But as long as we are acting in ways that of course allow people who have different points of view about it. But encouraging people on their own within the university community to take responsibility, to take advantage of new

opportunities, it does seem that that is fundamental to what we do and inevitably to what we do. There may be people for example who don't believe that climate change is one of the most serious issues facing civilization at this moment, and would object if we have strong initiatives around sustainability, around research and teaching on that. The fact that people have a different point of view shouldn't prevent universities organizing activities around issues that people at the university agree really need to be addressed where we can make our own distinct contribution to the issue.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: I want to ask.

ERWIN CHEMERINSKY: Let me venture into something more controversial. There's no doubt some of my students probably students on every campus especially some of our students of color believe allowing hateful or offensive speech is a threat to them, and that we should stop such speech from occurring, and I've certainly see this at Berkeley law. A year ago Ann Colter came and spoke on campus. It wasn't a law school event but I defending her right to speak and said under the first amendment a public university could not exclude here. Several of my students came to me quite upset, they said that the presence ever Ann Colter on campus was violence against them. They posted on all of the bulletin boards of the law school a criticism of me and if you look now at the Berkeley law website, if you look at our racial justice tab there's letter from a group of students of color saying that I "defend the intellectual acceptability of white spec sift views" I an issue you I've never done that. I don't believe that defending somebody's first amendment right to speak is defending the intellectual acceptability what they say but that's not how students see. It I think in terms of what we have to do as administrators we have to engage in a discussion with those who disagree with us.

I certainly explained to the students why I don't believe that the presence of a speaker they dislike is the same as violence against them. I don't think I persuaded them but I needed to talk to them. I believe that I need to speak up and express the values that I believe in.

Both antiracist values and free speech values and I also think I need to try to explain to the students why I believe that free speech is so important for advancing what they want to attain that. I believe that if the reckoning against antiblackness is going to be successful speech is going to be a crucial part of that.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: Thank you. I think you raise an

interesting point. There's a study done a couple of years ago where people were asked about whether there's difference between defending someone's right to say something offensive, and defending what they actually said. And unfortunately, the polling data showed that a lot of people merged those 2 things together. And I think it's deeply concerning because of course the way to be able to be a free speech advocate for me is being able to separate and bifurcate those 2 things that I support someone's right to say something without agreeing with what they're saying.

I feel like we can't have a discussion with both of you without talking a little bit about the Supreme Court. And so I think let's turn to something that was it's on the docket. January the Supreme Court took on a students' speech right case called Mahoney area school district. And this case puts center stage a question the Court has dodged a couple of times. Which is does the 1969 landmark student speech case TIFFs the K through 12 case tinker versus DesMoines the arm band Vietnam war case does that allow to student speech off campus particularly on the over Internet. Dean Chemerinsky I'll turn to you especially for higher education as opposed to K through 12

ERWIN CHERMERINSKY: It involves a high school sophomore. She tried out for the varsity cheerleading was upset when she learned she didn't make it and was assigned to the adjourn I don't remember and furious when found out a freshman made it ahead of here. She went and instagram and raised ... talking about the cheer team and athletic teams. She later posted another message without profanities. The cheerleading coach kicked her off the team. No other discipline was imposed on her much she was told she could try next year.

She and her family then sued the school saying that they've violated her first amendment rights for disciplining her for the speech over social media on a Saturday. The federal district court ruled in her favor. The United States court of appeal to the third circuit ruled in they are favor saying schools can't punish students speech over social media outside of school, not during school hours. So Michelle you're absolutely right. This is a crucial case about to what extent can schools discipline students for speech over social media not in school hours. I this highway there's great deal at stake on both sides.

On the one hand surely schools have to be able to discipline students that they're engaged in harassing or bullying behavior. I argued a case in the United States

cart of appeals a feminist majority foundation ... where students targeted with a social media platform you have to answer yes or no I think and threatened with rape and murder on the United States court of appeals ruled in favor of my clients the schools had an obligation to respond to the harassment.

It can't be just because the speech is out of school and on social media schools have no responsibility. But nor do he believe that schools should be able to punish students tore anything that school officials don't like that's critical of principles. So I actually think here the standard from tinker versus did he medicine board of education is important. Schools should only be able to punish if the speech is not protected or it's truly disrupted to school activities.

CHANCELLOR GILLMAN: And while this case involves K through 12 which I think will have a different dynamic in terms of the scope of free speech rights for younger people in those settings, you know it does raise something we hear about and think about all the time which are circumstances within higher education where a student or a faculty member who otherwise appears to be doing their job just fine, expressions an opinion in social media that really causes outrage among some members of the community. By the way this applies to people whether they're on the left or on the right. There are there is conservative speech that leads team people to think that a person really needs to be run out of the university. And there is left wing progressive speech that gets people crazy as well.

And I think if we are going to continue to face this many universities have been embroiled in tremendous court verse because someone says something that people in in the university outside of the professional zone in a people in the university community think is just inconsistent with them being part of the university community. And what has to be remembered is that throughout history of American higher education, it was routine for people object you know moved out of university communities because they spoke about unpopular issues, usually this was progressives who were expressing points of view inconsistent with the more conservative structure of American higher education and as recently as the 1950's, if you expressed associations or affiliations or affinities with communist speech, you could be fired.

Yale university said we're not going to have any witch hunts at Yale against communists because we are not going to have any witches. We are not going to hire people

who have certain political views so we have to be careful about what the boundaries are in saying that university officials should have the authority to punish people who otherwise are doing their jobs within a university setting merely because they are expressing points of view outside much the university setting that some people disagree with
EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: This is great time to turn to the Q and A because we have a number of related questions and one of them is how come universities can discontinue students outside of hours by for instance rescinding offers of admission. As opposed to high schools right which we are arguing maybe they can't do something like that when it's outside of school.

ERWIN CHEMERINSKY: This refers to an incident that happened at Harvard and it's interesting question of what are the speech rights or academic freedom rights of somebody before they are admitted to the university. Of course Harvard isn't a private university the first amendment doesn't apply but they follow free speech principles and academic freedom principles and it would be interesting if they were it kick the same students out for the behavior it's different than saying you haven't been admitted yet, and until you're admitted we're still having you, and what you've done justifies revocation of admission.

I don't know how I feel about that distinction but I see there's distinction there.

CHANCELLOR GILLMAN: And one of the things that occurs during the admissions process is students are expressing what their values are. What their character is, that's part of what you're assessing in deciding whether or not a person is actually thrive within the academic community and especially one that is trying to create a certain environmental of inclusivity.

So everybody I think agrees if you wrote an essay that described your point of view about a variety of issues admissions officers sometimes take that into account in if building a class, I think Erwin and I and so if you aren't formally been admitted. If you're not part of the university community, it does seem like there's at least an argument that that process of assessment and reassessment can occur until you're invited in. I think this Erwin and I agree once you are part of the university community then the rights that you have to express yourself should extend all of the protects of the first amendment and academic freedom protection to that activity. It should be very difficult, and almost unimaginable that merely because

you're expressing a point of view that people disagree with that is nevertheless protected by the first amendment that that should be a basis for removing someone from the university communities.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: On a kind of related note a few people posted questions about sort of the singer standard and this idea of when things impact or disturb the school setting. And they're asking about other forms of speech like hats with swastikas. Confederate flags which of course impact feelings ever safety of students and others. In that case should these symbol be allowed to be worn and that's the first question on part 2 is, if they are allowed to be worn then what other things can schools do to respond you know to this sort of like hate that's being spewed.

CHANCELLOR GILLMAN: There are certain settings within the university that the university does this a right to provide an extra measure of an environment that is free from from extremely disturbing speech. For example among other things universities are place where students live. Right this is and even the U.S. Supreme Court recognized that the free speech rights outside of people's private residences where there is some expectations of some calm are different than the free speech rights in other locations. So you know it does seem that universities in a content neutral way can say within a student housing complex. Don't put up in any flags right. You know these bulletin boards are designed for specifically reasons tow that a student living on the campus is not always encountering in their living space images or ideas that are disagreeable.

Much more difficult I think to establish those limits in areas of the campus where we would all agree are open areas that generally speaking would be protected by the if first amendment, you know there are people on our campus who don't like it occasionally when antiabortion protesters come on our ring road, and display messages and sometimes images of fetuses that they think are shocking. But it's but to the extent we agree that first amendment principles do apply to areas of the campus I think campuses just have to teach students that part of what this means to be in an environment which is an environment of the exchange of ideas and an environment of debate and discuss that they are going to encounter people that are expressing themselves in a way that you know that they might find disturbing.

ERWIN CHEMERINSKY: Of course agree with Howard. I want to look at the question a different way. One distinction

Howard emphasized between speech in say high schools as opposed to speech at the college and university level. The tinker case involved high school students in Des Moines. The Supreme Court thought it was or articulating a standard that was protect of speech. The problem is that subsequent cases in the Supreme Court haven't used the tinker test and have different school officials much more latitude and I would say too much latitude to regulate student speech. I would like to see the Supreme Court for high school students go back to a tinker type test but make it a robust test.

That there has to be actual disruption of school activities. College and universities are different whereas high schools play what's called an in loco parentis role. Colleges universities exist much more Howard was saying to be a forum where all ideas within views can be expressed. I certainly agree with his distinction among parts of campuses. But the reality is I can't imagine that we would ever say there's idea or viewpoint on campus that simply cannot be expressed somewhere.

And I think that it's a crucial premise of free speech is that all ideas and views can be expressed even very offensive ones.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: Another question that's come up and I feel like it comes up regularly when I speak to groups is the idea of violence. And how define violence in terms of speech the argument being that speech can you know create mental and emotional distress and is people argue is akin to violence. I don't know if one of you can speak to at that line of reasoning.

ERWIN CHEMERINSKY: I'm going to say something that may be unpopular. There's no doubt that speech can cause great emotional harm. It can cause people to be tremendously upset. Free speech had no affect we wouldn't safeguard it as a fundamental right. We protect speech precisely because it does impact. And the impact can be positive and the impact could be horribly negative, and speech can incite violence. We saw that on January 6th. But I think it's wrong to say that speech no matter how hurtful is itself violent. My students said, as I mentioned, that Ann Coulter's presence on campus was violence against them, and I think that lessens the word violence. And I think we know what we mean when we are talking about violence and it doesn't in any way minimize the harmful effects of speech but speech words aren't themselves violence.

CHANCELLOR GILLMAN: If any speech that you disagreed with that you thought could lead to a bad consequence and speech for example at the community and behalf of a political

candidate that you disagreed with would be considered violence then there would be know such thing as any right that someone would have to express themselves other than to express themselves in ways that everyone would always agree with which would be an impossibility.

You know, the ability of the government to treat certain ideas merely the expression of those ideas as dangerous was what allowed the government systemically to oppress especially progressive voices throughout most of American history. The South wouldn't allow antislavery speech. At the turn of the century there was pro labor speech was not allowed. During World War II antiwar speech was not allowed. There was, you know, work against the communists in the 40's and 50's. So the idea that you can take an idea and treat it as dangerous and suppressive is the gift to authoritarians everywhere.

The main thing I think we want to distinguish is the mere expression of an idea which I don't think can be defined as violence in a way that you should empower people to prevent. From other things that you can do with ideas. You can harass people with ideas. You can't specifically insight people to violence. You can threaten people. And part of first amendment law is to distinguish the mere expression of an idea that you don't like from things you can do with speech that lose it's protections under the first amendment and part of I think the education of understanding those boundaries is a very useful role for the center to play.

There are times when speech does cross the line but the mere expression of an idea really I think can never be viewed as the basis for punishing people

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: Can you hear me?

ERWIN CHEMERINSKY: Yes.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: Okay. I'm going to squeeze one last question in here from the Q and A, and then give you an opportunity to wrap up. Time flies when you're having fun they say.

One person in the queue is asking about talking about how the university they're at and let's presume it's a public university says people are forbidden from wearing any clothing with text or symbols or messages so they are content neutral. What they're saying is there's a proTrump hat that offends others. I think the question is what happens if you think someone is doing a content neutral regulation a pretext for stifling certain kinds of speech and how do you you know sort of feather that out?

CHANCELOR GILLMAN: Erwin will correct me I know but in a

public university setting it wouldn't be allowed for a university to tell people for example that they can't wear a trump hat. And while the rules are different perhaps at some private universities we would urge private universities who most of whom would embrace free speech ecosystem to also not take that stand, and you know, I know there's some settings and a K through 12 you want everybody to wear a certain uniform because you don't want people to start fighting with each other about what kind of clothes everyone is wearing. I don't know what I think about that in a K to 12 setting but I know in a university setting that would seem inconsistent with the kind of values that the center is representing.

ERWIN CHERMERINSKY: Howard is right, but let me put it in terms of the constitutional test. The fact that it's content neutral doesn't mean that it's automatically constitutional. Contentbased restrictions have to be necessary to achieve a compelling interest. But even content neutral regulations having to be substantially related to an important government interest, and the bottom line of that is I can't imagine that such a university regulation no matter how well intended can meet that test under the first amendment.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: So to wrap up I'd love to have each of you you know quickly looking ahead hopefully back to campus physical space together gatherings protests, rallies. What are things that we should be kind of thinking about, and you know aspiring to, as we go back to campus. Chancellor, why don't you start?

GRETA ANDERSON: Erwin at the beginning mentioned how the last year the energy of life on a campus dissipated so much. So we are just I cannot wait for the cacophony of people back and campus. We are going to see each other and before too long we will see the same kinds of arguments we are going to have with each other. That part of the life of a university we are really looking forward to that. We hope that we can continue to work in civic engagement to ensure students understand as they get engaged with vitally important issues how they can take that energy, learn more about the issues, and then take that into the broader community. So you know there is a lot that's going to be a little bit new and different. But to the and it may not be exactly the way that halves right after the bath above the pan but I can't wait for the Hurley burley atmosphere that we had before the pandemic. That's the fun of being at a great university.

ERWIN CHERMERINSKY: That's for certain. I think we should

all pause and reflect on how extraordinary the new media are with regard to speech and communication. It had that 20 years argue and I'll referring to the pandemic we went are have zoom we wouldn't have been able to continue to function as we did. The only alternative would have been to shut down or expose people. But we have incredible tools for communication. I think the Internet and social media that developed around it are the most important changes with regard to speech since the development of the printing press.

All of the issues that these media present with regard to speech with going to continue even after we're back in person. I agree with Howard that when we are back in person there's going to be all of the benefits of the energy of gathering but I think the underlying issues will still be there. And I think that we are going to continue to have to deal with the reckoning as the antiblackness and racism and how that requires constant action by our campuses to become antiracist and more inclusive

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: I cannot thank both of you enough to for taking time to talk about where we are going. The your breath and depth of knowledge is wonderful. I will close reiterating how much I appreciate your ongoing support of the center and its work. Thank you.

ERWIN CHEREMINSKY: It's a pleasure. Great wishes to all of you who are watching. Things are going to get better. I hope teal be able get together next year in Washington for the 4th conference.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: Continuing with the theme of using voices I want to showcase a signature program which is our voice initiative valuing open and inclusive communication and engagement. I'm going to let this video speak for itself. (Video on) the voice initiative was created to encourage and support research programs and activities that further the mission of the UC national center for free speech and assist in in gaming. The program is open to UC students faculty and staff and provides up at that \$5,000 in funding. This year the initiative focuses on the theme of breaking barriers. Campus expression and engagement. Voice funded programs activities and research identify barriers steps that can be taken to address barriers and how those steps help to build community. Our voice recipients are doing a variety he have formats let's put the spot light and some of them.

OTHER SPEAKER: I'm the founder and president of the revival scene. It is a journalism publication and community that focuses on intersectional feminism and

provides underrepresented college students specifically women with a platform to use their voices share opinions, empower themselves through telling their stories, and advocate for a very important causes socio political causes in the local and global community. The are research I'm doing is building skills that encourage open inclusive conversations. I've partnered with the YOLA conflict resolution center one that facilitating workshop that is focus on conflict resolution and conflict mediation. So far in the early results from the post surveys we are finding that more students feel confident after going through the trainings about their management styles. As well as their also feel this is supporting the principles community on our campus and how they engage in difficult conversations.

Hello we are the cofounders and cohosts of hot off the pod which is a podcast created with a voice grant from the UC center for free speech. We are both UCSD students and our goal was to create a project that would help students at our university connect with the news and with different stories in a new medium.

OTHER SPEAKER: Since we both work at the daily nexus we've been bringing on guests who are community members, professors at UCSD and fellow student journalists. We own hosts a fellow from the UC free speech center.

SPEAKER: We started with K12 focussed project, and we are seeing really exciting results with our invitation to K12 teachers to invite their students to make public antihate messages at the end of antihate lessons and teaching. Of the voice grant enabled us to pilot us versus hate at the university level and our own campus at UC San Diego. We have been excited to see what older students do particular lake effect the deeper instruction of diversity and including courses in making final products that go beyond a traditional paper or our classic academic products.

We've enjoyed our time at the center. We've received so much support from the amazing group of scholars and activists. We look forward to showing the rest rest of the results after we complete the project

SPEAKER: And that's just a glimpse into the center's voice program, find out what all our recipients are doing and learn more at our website.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: I am incredibly proud of our voice program and the interesting and impactful voice the recipients are doing. Many project ares correct today the final topic sustaining and building civic engagement on campus. Bun of the attention grabbing headlines was the 5

% of voting eligible young people ages 18 through 29 cast a ballot in the 2020 presidential election. This was a turn out that surpassed even the 2016 election. Students did more than vote. Young Americans fueled a wave of civic engage. And this rise was not unique to college students however. So above I introduce the panels' moderate or I would like to do one final poll.

In a moment you will see a poll question jump up on your screen. Which is going to ask each of you to let us know which campus engagement pathways you have participated in this year, you can select more than one I believe. Helping people register to vote. Volunteering, advocacy. Activism, incorporating civic engagement list owns into the classroom and something that not listed above. So if you would cake a moment to fill that out. What I am going to do while the results are being tabulated is introduce you to Greta Andersson. Greta is a reporter for inside higher ED she's written numerous stories about student activism in politics. Get out the vote efforts and attempted suppression of student votes. Much Greta as work is published by other news outlets and cited by organizations. She is a DC area native and worked at inside higher ED since 2019. A temple Greta studied journalism and Spanish. She was news editor. She is also a contributor to ALDIA news a bilingual man sin. Perfect timing. Of taking a look at the results not surprised and such a significant group of people on today's conference have been involved. 40% helping people register to vote. Of 45% volunteering. Almost 70% doing advocacy or activism. 27% love that incorporating civic engagement lessons into the classroom it's such a key component and 35% doing thing that we weren't able to list. So Greta I'm leave you introducer the panelists to this active and engaged audience of ours.

GRETA ANDERSON: Good morning everyone to you on the West Coast and those of you who are not good afternoon. Thank you so much Michelle, and to the UC free speech and civic engagement center for having me today. I'm excited to kickoff this panel with some really engaged experts on campus voting and civic engagement in general. And I'm actually going to let the panelists introduce themselves, we are going to start off with JEN. If you want to take it away.

JEN DOMAGALGOLDMAN: Hi Greta. And thank you Michelle. It's pleasure to be here with you all today. I'm Jenn DomagalGoldman and I'm the executive director of the all in campus democracy challenge. Which is a nonpartisan civic

engagement effort hosted at the 501 ... in Washington D.C. I myself are up or down the road from Greta in Maryland, and established in 2016. We work with over 800 colleges and universities in over 50 states plus DC through support structure and recognition in terms of helping them institutionalize democratic engagement with a little D. That is civic learning plus political engagement plus participation and we are super excited to be here today.

GRETA ANDERSON: And Katya, why don't you take a minute to introduce yourself, and the organization you participate with.

KATYA EHRESMAN: Absolutely. Again thank you for having me here today. I am Katya Ehresman a senior at use continue studying government and public public policy but I'm the chair of the advisory board here with the campus vote project. So the campus vote project is a national nonpartisan student engagement initiative working on democratic engage the on college campuses and up lifts students as a student facing organization to give them the capacity to do work on campuses. I also Cree IT add the student voting network threw the campus vote project a project led by students for students to come together and organize around the election but also now after the election. Much and nonpartisan capacities around legislation in their own states as well as federally.

GRETA ANDERSON: Sorry. Alex from the Goodman foundation if you could take a minute to.

ALEXANDRIA HARRIS: We are the founded really to honor and drew Goodman who was... when they went to Mississippi to register AfricanAmericans to vote so that's our legacy story, and now in modern day we are about magnifying young people or voices and votes and making. We have and 90 campuses and 27 states. Of 24 campuses are HBCU and we are focussed on training students helping them do whatever they can to be focussed on supporting our democracy in a holistic way.

GRETA ANDERSON: Thank you so much. So we are going to start off with the question about this particularly unusual year that we've had with the pandemic, and the broad civil unrest. Very politically fraught environment for a presidential election that happened to fall within a crazy year and as Michelle mentioned we saw record turn out from student voters from the initial counts we've seen. The institute that tracks these votes, and I'm wondering if y'all can talk about what you saw on campuses in terms of strategies for getting out the student vote. Any that you felt particularly contributed to this record turn out we

saw, and you know aside from the energy that might have contributed to students getting out just with the political environment we were in right now. In what ways did you Siakam puss promoting student voting and BHA do you think will continue beyond this interior. And let's start with JEN.

JEN DOMAGALGOLDMAN: Thanks. All 3 of our organizations are part of a broader collective around this work and something called the... a lot of the work that the really great ways that help build the work. And so I just want to acknowledge that even as we answer the questions I think you'll see some of that hopefully synergy. One of the things this we started to do was on challenge when we realized we were all going to be stuck in kind of zoom mode through the election was to really think about what does virtual organizing start to look like? How do we use some of these tools to do that? We started to create campus couch parties so really and then other things they called budding power hours and we released or are just releasing because the newsletter will come out later today a report on relation and texting based programs so really how to help their own either entirely virtual couch parties or socially distanced. We did that with folks both at Andrew Goodman, and saw some great numbers.

Saw students doing friend to friend texting so really being given some messages through an app. . That then they could push you to the people they actually now so that was meaningful because people trusted that. And it gave them information so accepted them a link to check the registration or send them on link to okay you need to register here. .

You've chosen to vote where school is or vote at home or you've moved because how many of us moved around as you to figure out where to settle down. And so it helped to do a lot of those piece and gave them community space to do. We had DJs playing music online doing that and gave out prizes and things like that so it created community which I think so many of us were kind of feeling the yearning for and also giving some training of you don't have to know the answer to every question. If you don't know the answer you could type that back to them. So I think we found it to be a really effective tool, that potentially has some roll over in the future.

GRETA ANDERSON: That sounds cool. Katya as a student do these sound like good ways to get students engaged especially in lieu of the traditional campus table where students might walk by on the way to class to sign up and

register to vote. Do you think leveraging social media or texting some of the strategies that Jen mentioned are a good way to engage students.

KATYA EHRESMAN: Absolutely. Yeah JEN's report will be great. I think the relation and organizing and peertopeer organize something the future of youth engagement but also was probably the biggest thing for both parties to turn people out but also nonpartisan organizations to register young voters to tell them in information about the election and get them arrested toy go to the polls or find their nearest polling location and cast the ballot and I think this is one of the biggest things is that it's the epitome of meeting students where they are both on social media. That's the biggest place young people are consuming information especially about politics or social issues. There are so many ways these things can get shared and I think organizations as well as just getting power to young people to create their own content. Dances, like any content that would point to election information or how to register to vote in their places or the campus Web project like it had a find your loan ballot box wherever you're dropping off your vote.

There are so many ways we are meeting students or the platforms where they were giving them information palatable to email this. It's similar when you on your own campus tabling you're tabling a school or building you have classes in where you can see peopling that you know and could actually have the similar relation and organizing in person since we can't do that safely it's another way to engage that community and create that kind of familiarity with the information because it's from a trusted source. So I think that those are adaptiveness of organizations as well as students to transmit that information is probably the biggest change in 2020 but also as a young perpetrator I noticed journalists and organizations were just more interested and uplifting student voices and hearing from students about what went well, and what didn't and what that were seeing on the ground because so many times even like student facing organizations would talk about students but in this year in this election we actually had journalists having features on young organizers. Having a lot of interviews with young people talking about experiences and what they wanted to see and I think it also helped break down the Monday literature I have narrative of young people I did not see in previous elections but also this is the first presidential I could vote in so maybe that's part of it.

GRETA ANDERSON: That's interesting you mention that and I was going to ask you Alex to comment a little bit about what institutions themselves or leaders having doing to promote voting strategies. Do you think it's good for them to work handinhand with student organizes and the efforts being led directly by students activists and organizers in order to know exactly what's going to work to promote student turn out and in terms of the institutions themselves what sorts of things did you see from campus partners in 2020.

ALEXANDRIA HARRIS: So many things. Because the year was so outrageous for students there were so many things we had to do as an organization especially since we spend a lot of time working daytoday with students. And spending a lot of time working through the campuses and so we were talking to students about housing and security. We were talk about the lack of work study and all those things we were able to help them thought important and we saw schools getting creative and stepping up and finding solutions to like people's basic human needs which obviously is the first thing you need to address before you get to voter register. So working with schools directly we were able to utilize one of the digital things we have which had my vote every where and so schools that were successful within our network imbedded my vote every where into their basic registration page so when first year students were coming on and they were doing orientation. Voter registration was a part of their experience and they made too really great.

It's easy for students to get registered in mass numbers. In Louisiana we worked with schools to make sure the student ID were voter ID compliant. Which is a huge issue especially for students of color who may not have pass Park Boards or other forms of ID which would affect the ability to vote. So when schools, especially the state schools were stepping up and saying we are going to take this ton something I didn't care about you see results. Having on campus polling sites. Super helpful and we see especially you know, obviously with campuses sometimes you have issues now of course this ended up being a complicated issue because some might have started on campus and been displaced but having the ability was helpful.

One thing that we saw in terming of voter confusion were students registered and campus and then might have gone home because of COVID and then when they received any kind of mailing from the board of elections and it was bounced back they were wiped from the registrar so a lot of conscous schools were trying to work and

contention with us and students to figure out where can we send this and forward it to you if it was possible and if not just letting you know you have a mail because it's really important. So schools that took a hands on approach to this were effective in making sure students were aware and we sought results anything schools can do to educate students about you know how they can vote. Where they can vote. Make sure they are putting up in if I miss in if going out broadly is helpful. With us we looked with a lot of schools mass text messages. Those were super helpful. Obviously we go through various channels. Much to make sure the students would opt in but then we were able to make sure we were clearing up misinformation and it helped a lot.

GRETA ANDERSON: That's a perfect segue into the next question. The comments about voter ID and registers at a specific resident and confusion about students who are able to vote in bun place or another. We were getting into a time where legislatures across the country are promoting and passing in some cases laws that restrict voter access, and some that particularly take aim at students that who are voting at this place of residents near their campus and I'm wondering Alex I'll jump back to you on this one how a campuses themselves with be pushing back against these restrictions. Putting out statements, I noted that there was a recent statement from the American council of education and a number of different higher education organizations about voter participation, and promoting draws among higher education institutions but do you think specific campuses or college leaders could be doing more to show that they want their students voting and to try and push back against these laws whether they restricted.

ALEXANDRIA HARRIS: Definitely. 70% of young voters voted by mail or early. This is a really big deal these laws have specifically targeting our students and our campuses. So it really matters when presidents step up on say, you know we are standing for the people efforts for example or we are standing for the job Lewis voting rights advancement act. These types of gestures go a really long way and then all of those other pieces of the making sure things I mentioned before that can specifically combat state issues are important but shake making sure we support these federal efforts are important because they dismantle all of those other state laws that are popping up.

And we are seeing you know, not every school is tolling make that kind of statement and I understand that there can be implications particularly if a school is state

funded there can be some push back. But when schools step up and make statements and gestures they mean a lot.

GRETA ANDERSON: What do you think about this one? Do you think schools should be speaking out more. Do you think student organizers in particular could be focussing their efforts in terms of lobbying in terms of social media, proteins what are you hoping to see in response to these bills from your campus peers?

OTHER SPEAKER: Absolutely.

KATYA EHRESMAN: Young people already are protesting and speaking up around HR1 before the people act somewhere else in the state legislatures. In technical as we had organization that is allows for the students to show up in hazmat suit to testify with voter suppress I have bills that would actively make it harder for them to vote in a state that already is difficult to participate in the elections of. And so I think that definitely it would be helpful for a campuses to make affirmative statements especially if more strict voting states especially to talk during a state legislative session why they were in favor of bills or laws at that could allow for students to participate in the elections more equitably and access bully but there are things they can could do with institutionalizing knowledge to allow for the students participating on the campuses to have an easier time.

Without having to be pushed they could send the reminders without registration early own in the year or while people are getting are registered for class force the first time they get started are owe modules or circumstance rum or they could testify in Congress or up lift voices that they are campus, on camp Russ currently or virtually and talking about these types of bills federally and locally.

And so I think already a lot of things that the campuses can do but also a lot of people that are making their voices had heard. Texas and New Hampshire have strict new laws in the LO that your intentional to discrimination against young people by removing student ID as ID. Other states the campuses would go a long way if campuses would talk about either intentional or not their policies in place where the campus is locate that had make it more difficulty for students to vote and 52% of young people voting should not be the feeling it should be the floor. Anything that campuses can do would make it easier and I think we would appreciate it a lot and young activists.

GRETA ANDERSON: JEN if you want to comment on that but I

will segue into a question about the nonpartisan status of all of your organizations, and how you're navigating that as these vote are restriction bills with pushed by Republicans and most the states they have been proposed in or passed. And the rhetoric around this is mostly coming from the you know as one political party is focussed on this issue how do you maintain your status as a nonpartisan organize when you want to be actively pushing back against specific folks in state legislatures.

JEN DOMAGALGOLDMAN: That's a great question, and one of the colleagues did a great job answering the previous one.

I will say a few things. One we look at a large part of our job as being educators. What happens is LOT of college president he is and faculty and administers don't know all the things we are tubing about right now. They might be voters by they've often lived in the same place quite a while. They understand when they update the drivers license they can check a box and reregister or change that. Once you are part of the process it's easier. It's the first time voting much it's the some of these things around ID when you you know are in one of these situations where you move around a bit and things like that with your a students that are much more complicated.

So you know part of what we view our job to make sure more and more folks on campuses understand the issue and they are part of solving it and part of that is being able to talk and stand up for issues just like that that ACE statement that you you alluded to earlier, and inside the higher ED covered. Part of it is making sure they understand the rights of their students and how they you know that they have choices where they register in many cases and what that means. And what the burden on them is. Part of it is making sure they can do a lot by you know creating partnerships with the local election officials and starting to have conversations. They don't even need to get to the point where they are adversarial initially and also they can do a lot facing inward right.

They can help support students and AGF fellows, you know, voting coalitions will U by lifting them up by talking about them. By talking about voting. As early as they are convocation statements. By connecting and breaking down some bureaucracies so maybe get to the point it shouldn't be with always the direct work students are doing. It should be this is something basic that institutionalized into kind of the work we do. And so there have been examples that have in many different cases and Alex gave a number of great examples. There's campus

in California that has an I have I can engagement and you have to read it and check it before you can register for classes you're fought required to register to vote but you have to read it and say yes I'd like to register or know so you're paying attention.

There are campus that is are giving that kind of information at lots of different points. But then helps you know to break down those different barriers and so I think you know helping do those different things you know and then depending right. Because you're right there are different political pressures and college presidents. We created the president's commitment to full student voter participation. We've had over 300 universities signed on even as we launched during COVID and they've been deal with other issues and they are starting to step up and writing opeds and talk about the work. There's still a lot of work to do. But I think there's a good pieces and then not trying to diminish the fact we are facing serious issues that many of them are steeped in racial injustice and white supremacy and other things that we could spend forever and a day talking about, but there are also some good signs right. So noting California passed a bill in 2019 that requires the public institutions in California to a point a voting coordinator and create a campus action plan is a great step. My own state passed the assembly right. So a similar thing is going into effect here.

So I think there are places that are starting to real identifies like there is part of the educational process. If we want voters to keep voting you need it create ways for them to understand that and we are not doing enough in the K12 system and even if we were because it changes across every state we have to do a reeducation process for our college students. And so you know. I think that's where I'm at on it now.

GRETA ANDERSON: Alex, I'm curious if you think that as we talk about presidents or whomever on campuses pushing back against the types of voter restriction laws we've seen if they run the risk of alienate, conservative students who might support some of these laws as the issue becomes political. How should campuses tow the line between being bipartisan and trying to include all students in the voting process.

ALEXANDRIA HARRIS: A really good question request I can tell you we've experienced a lot of people being dissatisfied with our messaging. Particularly when we challenge, challenges to our democracy.

OTHER SPEAKER: And I can speak at least for me as a leader

my stance about it which is our, draws democracy and challenges when we are trying to combat that that is not partisan at all. In fact, would we are paying attention to was' going on we see people care about this both sides of the ale. It's more of isolation ever the students by pretending it doesn't exist. ... I think that at least for me and my sense ever communications for our programing we have been 100% clear that we will not waver in this. And so we've had schools that say listen we don't like this. Of we don't want to be part of your network.

And for that I've had meetings, not plenty, I've had some where we sit down with the powers that be and say I want to hear, I want to hear what your experience and what's type of conversation because there are a lot of powers you know JEN you alluded to some a.m. we don't like to say them explicitly but there's a lot of thing at play in this conversation. But when we are talking about an intersection at our capital, I don't think that there's any way that you can be on the fence about it. And that's not partisan. And I'm very clear about that with my team, our ambassadors and people say you know with you can can't say that that insurrection you know and if that makes people uncomfortable then I'm sorry, but what happened, the attack on our capital was so unAmerican, and to me such an act of terrorism that any support of that or defense of it, or making space for that, is in such attack of our democracy that I don't have space for that side of the conversation. Now there are lots of things that make people uncomfortable that are kind of where people think you're being almost political, or almost parses and we try to really make sure we're extremely clear.

We don't support candidates. We don't support anything that would be considered Democrat or Republican. But you know for the people is something that we support. And I know that that's something that makes some schools uncomfortable.

And I would really encourage schools to look at it. Because when you look at Georgia for example, and what just came out, and that law that governor Kemp signed it criminalized acts that our students were doing. Offering water. All those things that are completely innocent. And when you are criminalizing the acts of your students then we should all care and if we can find a way to make it safer and better for students we should all care. I would really encourage schools to be mindful of these things and all the things we've alluded to before in terms of like looking at the voted complaint IDs for student ID looking

at election day as holidays. Things like that that make it easier to vote. That's American and I really take issue with people say it's partisan.

GRETA ANDERSON: Katya, I'm going to let you jump in because I know it's important issue right now and I want to hear from your perspective as a student organizers for voting on campus, and nationally with the campus votes project. Have you had conversations with peers who see this as a really partisan issue? ? Have you had uncomfortable interactions with them? How have you in an of debated the issue of vote are restriction with your peers.

KATYA EHRESMAN: Absolutely. I think it's really good question. I think in person before we went online but also online I have seen both democratic and Republican colleagues on my own campus and peers. Both tabling and both trying to increase voter education and voter registration and campus. In their own means I think that it is a cross partisan issue young people want to get more of the young peers to vote for dad's that they personally believe in, and just want more young people voting in general.

And I think that especially like powers that be on a campus setting or in parties or nationally there is' a lot of misunderstanding with young people as being siloed in the more naturally partisan camps where they think draws or democracy reform or voting rights is a partisan issue. I any every young person I would talk to wants 100% of eligible students on campus to vote. That is across the board true. And it's especially interesting it kind of paradox we see where people are talking about campuses as in one party as this the place that should be a free speech arena and in another party as this thing ha should be improving the rights to vote and if one party wants it to be a free speech and the other wants voting rights they do go handinhand everybody it shouldn't be partisan. It should be a contest was best for young people to vote for the future of our own policies or draws or engagement so I think that there is just a kind of a misunderstanding what is best for young people and what we want and the campuses because we see free speech and want speech and we want the arena to contest what is the best for our peers that we agree with and to da that weigh wouldn't to see that played out in elections where every young person is able to cast a ballot if they are eligible and I think that it is cross partisan and I agree with Alexandre, JEN this shouldn't be a partisan issue and the more we educate young people but

also campuses and people in charge that are like adults in the room that it isn't a monolithic change. A lot do but they also want to vote for ROTC issues because they are currently in reserve on their campus or parents are veteran or weigh tonight vote for a job market in a year or 2. Those are also issues that young people care about so the more we educate both groups I think the more that we will breakdown as kind of the partisanship that is at play in the conversation of youth voting rights.

GRETA ANDERSON: Thanks. I'm going to jump into conversations with civic engagement beyond voting including forms of activism. Participating in the 2020 census advocacy volunteering. How do you all think that campuses can best support student engagement beyond voting especially in the off years between elections and what do you think the relationship is between advocacy of proteins volunteering and voter turnout outcomes much do you think those forms of participation beyond just voting in it these years could lead to higher turn out in election years and Alex I will let you start off on that one.

ALEXANDRIA HARRIS: So last year obviously with the large amount of, unarmed black murder by the police people were upset. Particularly huh young people. The students we heard some students who said. You know, I would prefer to protest than to vote. What difference will my vote make? And that's not every student but particularly at the height of that moment. If everyone can remember what it was like email were really disillusioned and see we did a lot of work helping students understand the connection between voting and these issues. Why voting for the attorney general matters. Why voting for prosecutors matters. Why vote forking the mayor matters as it pertains to police and making those connections. That was role of student big and important, not for just for the students but for everyone.

And what we find is really easy way to mobilize people is around issues. So you consistently see students turn out the most when they are motivated by some kind of issue. So really leaning on the issues. Climate and things that people care about that it are young people particularly around the economy. This is really motivated and we saw them turn out in mass numbers for the presidential election.

Outside of these typical ways that I've already explained that an institution would be involved and supporting students registering to vote, an imbedding in the process. Student poll workers are such a huge issue.

And we saw with COVID so many people who are typically poll workers who are tired were the most at risk for COVID. And so we saw polling places being closed, and we really made a really strong effort not only as an organization but through one of our ambassadors to do a student poll worker program. And so that program was supported not only by our investors but also by institutions who educated students. Not only is this a great way to be involved in democracy but you can go get paid. So bundling up those information for students and ways they can be involved in our democracy is huge and makes it a lot easier for the students who is navigating so much Wight right now with COVID and with campuses. Got to be online or if ear he going to be back on campus it makes it easier for them to be involved in a holistic way.

Why do you think some of those other ways can promote voter turnout in election years

KATYA EHRESMAN: Yeah because I think some ways are getting people involved in the idea take make change in their own communities but also as special elections come up and those are almost always connected to issues. I think when we live students the you a ton mutt by also the education and resources to figure out ways they can protest. Ways they can advocate between general elections giving them the means to advocate in campuses to institutionalize voter education for the next election 4 had years from now thinking about future kids and the campus so they don't have to go through the like fight to find the information to get their peers to register to vote because they may not be freshmen 4 years from now when the next election rolls around for a general election but they may have younger siblings or just want other people who have on better or easier time than they D I think that giving more people the means but also the encouragement to participate and be heard and be able to make an engaged change in their own community especially on campuses is important but it's also the fact a lot of states don't have year around 365 so there are a lot of bills happening that directly affect what's happening in the upcoming selection. It's important to encourage young people to vote. And that is federally ... young people across the board off easier information about elections but also in their states where they are actively being criminalized in Georgia or actively making it harder for young people to register and the campus address if they have another address outside of state.

So I think that there are ways they can tangibly make a difference by advocating against policy that make it

harder for other young people to vote.

GRETA ANDERSON: JEN you talked a little bit about the institutionally satisfactory of civic participation on campuses and how campus staff members are getting involved in those efforts during election years whether it's voter registration or giving out information about where they should vote. But what about in these off years like 2021, you know, 2022. How should campuses continue to institutionalize civic engagement in other ways when there's not an election coming up.

JEN DOMAGALGOLDMAN: Great questions Greta, and also great responses from my colleagues on that previous question. I loved the kind of the threads there of civic learning and how... how do you find issues you're passionate about and do the work around them and how has that happened last year. And I think you know we want to bring that kind of energy to the nonpresidential year and where year and I think a lot of us leaned in hard in the past year of really helping students understand and do some education around some of the folks that show up on the local ballot matter.

Even understand the power of your School Board in terms of what's talked about and taught in your classrooms. All of those build an immense amount of hour and have a much more concerted impact on your daytoday lives I think has become an important piece. You know and I think another piece that's important to kind of remember is you know students because they cut across states in terms of with are they might go to school. You know we're all prepping right now fourth fact that New Jersey and Virginia gubernatorial elections in the fall and primary coming up in if June. We are hoping to prepare students at those campuses but students from those states who will be potentially elsewhere, safely elsewhere in the fall who want to be able to vote by mail. ... and wanted to vote from virginia. There's an important piece and that's a piece of why this is year around work and if we want to increase and have at that 5% be the ground floor, that the work can't just happen right before an election right. It needs to be normalizing, and creating a civic culture that we talk about as the issues. That we think about how civic learning with being imbedded in the classroom around the different things we are majoring in.

Whether it's criminal justice or its you know education or its communications or you know, and not just political science how are we making sure those already happening and how are we making sure we're asking every time about voter registration and not just what we

[inaudible] consider important in it a national election and I think that's a piece of helping that. I think it's a way that national organizations can track a lot of this and share and then folks on campuses like Austin can take that and learn what they into he had to help you the students in that particular so I think there's a lot of really important work to do that and I think there are a lot of dinner stakeholders. That have roles really important roles in in terms of [inaudible].

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: I see you popup, I don't know Greta if you had a final question or.

GRETA ANDERSON: I was going to ask Alex if she wanted to finish up on that question of institutionally nation by noting any strategies she's seen and campus or wanted to give a shoutout to any campuses to do a good job of this during election off years.

ALEXANDRIA HARRIS: Some of the... bunch of schools to made a friendly competition and getting people registered to vote. Which is fantastic to do as Jen put it in this you into he had to do that in the after years in toward to create a great base and then we will a great success last year with BARD college and speaking of institutionally satisfactory that was a college that said help us. We have this on campus polling sight being challenged by duchess county and they removed it off campus all the way down the street like 3 miles where people had actually been killed on at that street to a polling place that are accessibility issues. And you couldn't get in there to get a so we fought with the school had this successful litigation and now the polling place, campus polling place is back on. We were able to see the president go and vote there along with a bunch of students. And that's a great example of what working handinhand to care about students voting and make sure you can do whatever it is possible to make sure it is the of powerful for democracy. So really proud of these actions.

GRETA ANDERSON: That's great and the excellent note to end on. Over to you Michelle.

EXEC DIR DEUTCHMAN: I hate to have to wrap this up but I'm so grateful to all of you, so inspired. I found this day to be so inspiring that all of you are doing such important work and talking about you know these salient topics with candor and humor which is important and, of course, all 4 of you women which I think is just amazing to also see, that's right sort of you know leading change making. So I want to thank all of you and say look forward to thinning collaboration together. I hope. And then I am a getting

to wrap for the day which is that say it's hard to believe we've come to the our third annual SpeechMatters conference everybody these 2 days are the result of hard work on a number of people and I want it reiterate my gratitude.

I want to say thank you to the in credit Brenda Pitcher. John Shan Schwartz and the Glen Echo group. I want to recognize our colleagues and at the office of the president all of whom are key to the success and finally I would like it thank the members of the centers an academic and national advisory boards for their ongoing support and, of course, I want to thank our participants to took the time today to be with us to learn and be inspired. If you enjoyed today's programing and you would like to think about sponsoring supporting our work you can make a donation through our website. If you are interested in being a responsible son for next years' conference will hopefully will be in person together or any other programing please reach out to me.

I'll just end which saying our freedom of speech rights are the cornerstone of American democracy. And this year our country has been tested in so many ways and it's vital we continue to lift our voices in the phase of challenge and engage with one another. As Martin Luther King said our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter. I look forward to continuing to partner with you as we chart the course for campus expression and engagement. Thanks so much.