

On August 14th, Supervisor of Elections Wesley Wilcox presented Principal Carlisle with a trophy for Vanguard High School, winner of the 2018-2019 High School Voter Registration Challenge.

The Voter Registration challenge is an event where nonpartisan representatives of the Supervisor of Elections Office go to Marion County public high schools to help educate and assist students from ages 16 up with registering and pre-registering to vote. Out of the seven public high schools in Marion County, Vanguard had the highest student participation percentage.

According to the Marion County Supervisor of Elections Office, "The Annual High School Registration Challenge is aimed at increasing civic participation by registering and educating eligible students on the election process. The winning school is determined by the highest number of voter registrations based on the percentage of eligible students."

This recognition reminds our students to remain civically active in the country through voting, a duty that will soon become even more pertinent with the upcoming 2020 election.

While we might not always consider our vote as significant, the reality is that it can have a larger impact than we think. Starley Ard, an employee of the Marion County Supervisor of Elections Office, says, "Every vote counts and your one vote can be the deciding factor on a candidate or issue that will affect you, your friends and family, and neighbors."

"This is especially true for local elections, where your vote can have an even bigger impact. Decisions made by local government can affect almost every aspect of your daily life and can happen almost instantaneously," she said.

"By choosing not to vote, you allow someone else's vote to hold more power and make your decisions for you."

The Voter Registration Event is becoming increasingly successful with its turnout of students registering to vote. The explosion of social media and the presence of issues pertaining to social activism have reminded our generation of the importance of being politically active. Increasingly, the youth of today are taking part in opportunities to take a stand in what they believe in, exploring what they can do to make a difference. One of the best ways to elicit change is being a part of the conversation, and you can do that through your vote.

"Your vote is your voice and it is important to be heard in every eligible election," Ard said.

You can register to vote at [RegistertoVoteFlorida.gov](https://www.RegistertoVoteFlorida.gov).