

SAVE: Student Activist for Voting Equality

Overview of the Campaign:

- Bard and Vassar students are not allowed to vote in Dutchess County. The Dutchess County Board of Elections claims that we are not residents of Dutchess County. This policy is a clear case of political and student discrimination.
- A coalition of Bard and Vassar students are running a political campaign and filing a lawsuit to ensure our voting rights for the 2000 elections, as well as a permanent change in the Board of Elections registration policy. That's why we need your support.
- We need hundreds of students to apply to register to vote. A week or two after you apply to vote, you will receive a questionnaire. It's critical that you fill out the questionnaire and then campus mail it to Monica Elkington. We'll photocopy it, and then send it to the board. Soon after, you'll receive a notice of rejection. You should campus mail the rejection to Monica Elkington. *In order to win the lawsuit, we need copies of your registration application, questionnaire, and notice of rejection.* These forms are evidence of the board's discrimination and will form the backbone of the lawsuit.

Existing History:

- In 1996, the Dutchess County Board of Elections had a haphazard policy of rejections. Some Bard and Vassar students got rejected, some were accepted, and some heard nothing. Some students got questionnaires, others didn't. The students, along with Allen Jossey, ran a campaign to ensure everyone's voting rights. The board quickly ceded and allowed all Bard and Vassar students to vote.
- In 1998, the Board had a firm policy of rejection. Every student living at Bard or Vassar, who moved from another county, was rejected.
- We're working to ensure a permanent change with the board's policy toward Bard and Vassar students.

The issue

In Dutchess County, students are the only citizens of whom questionnaires are demanded and the only citizens whose expressed intent of residency is not accepted. We are the only class of voters in Dutchess County who are so blatantly and obviously prohibited from exercising our right to enfranchisement. We have a constitutional right to vote. The chief Elections Commissioner has denied students their rights in order to pursue and perpetuate political ends and this must stop.

Campaign Plan:

- Over the next two semester's SAVE will be organizing press-conferences, rallies, phone-ins, coalitions, and more registration drives.
- To get more involved, contact Michael at x4005 or mc753. We have weekly meetings on Wednesdays at 8:00 in the SAC (old gym basement).