

SECURE YOUR FUTURE!

By: Ngozi Agomo

With the 2012 presidential election being right around the corner the importance of young college voters has never been as critical as this.

Regardless of whether you are a Republican in favor of former Gov. Mitt Romney or a Democrat who wants to see President Barack Obama get re-elected, voting in this election may be the most important election thus far, with so many life changing issues at stake.

Four years ago, college students played a vital role in turning out the black vote, but now it seems that those same people, who were once excited about nominating the first black president, have slowly lost interest in voting during this election. There has been studies that show the turn out for young voters this year may be significantly lower than in 2008.

That is why many organizations on campus, i.e. Black Student Union and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. just to name a couple, have been helping young students get registered. BSU encouraged all students who have not yet registered to vote to do so. They presented a presentation early this month to help educate students on the candidates as well as gave them the opportunity to register afterwards.

I spoke with Genesis Smith, the president of BSU, who said the turnout was great with about 30 students in attendance. Genesis said, "This presidential election has a large impact on students as it relates relevant issues that will affect minority groups." But of course there are still many who have not yet registered.

So with this being such an important election year, why is it so hard to grasp student's interest with a process that only takes about 5 minutes? Genesis said when it comes to voting it requires people to do their own research outside of what is seen on television because often times what is being televised is biased.

But have college a student really lost interest, or are they simply unaware of the issues and policies that will affect their future in the hands of either candidate.

Now let's put aside the obvious. We all know the

challenges that this country is facing, such as the growing debt and struggling economy, which both parties are working hard to recover, but more importantly the bigger issue at stake here is higher education. That will be will be the topic of intense discussions and debates between President Obama and Gov. Mitt Romney as we head towards Election Day. These issues involve the cost of college tuition, which has increased by 68% making it harder for student loans to get paid off leaving many of students in debt. Both candidates have their own views and strategies that will either help or hurt college students, and it's up to them to register and vote for who they want to be in charge.

If you have not yet registered to vote and would like to the deadline is October 9th. This election is important for our generation because it will determine our future and we cannot afford to be silent. By not voting, college students are giving up their most powerful tool for creating change.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

NEWS:

THE STRIKE IS OVER: BUT WHO REALLY WON?

By: David Douglas, Staff Reporter

BLONO VIOLENCE

By: Erin Moore

WARNING PERSON WITH WEAPON, be alert do NOT approach! All students at Illinois State University have received this text message or email several times this school year. The school year has barely begun and our university has already been in news headlines for the violence going on around campus. The first incident of violence we had this school year was a shooting that occurred at a party on August 18 around 3 a.m. The young woman who was shot suffered severe injuries, but authorities say they were not life-threatening. ISU President Al Bowman stated in an email to ISU students, faculty and staff, "Although this is an unfortunate way to begin the new school year, it is important you know that your well-being is our top priority and that Illinois State will always quickly provide emergency information throughout the campus community." Hopefully the recent crime has more students aware of the seriousness that goes on around them everyday.

When you are in a new area, use common sense when out. Some ways that you can protect yourself are to never walk alone, always stay with a group especially at night. Everybody has a cell phone, use them to communicate with your group if you ever get separated. Make sure someone knows where you are at all times and use the campus escort service at night if you have to. Call (309) 438-WALK for Redbird Safe Walk, they will escort you wherever you need to go. Students say they do feel safe on campus regardless of the events that have taken place this school year. For some, it still serves as a reminder that you can never be too careful.

Enough was enough. They were tired of not having things their way. On September 10, the Chicago Public School (CPS) teachers union went on strike for the first time in 25 years. The strike left 350,000 students out of school for over a week. There were a number of factors that were taken into account before the strike was agreed upon by the union. Suburban school teachers are compensated more than inner city teachers. The union wanted to see a raise for their teachers. It went much deeper than that. The biggest things that were highlighted were better benefits and job security. The union feels that too many teachers have been fired because of things such as evaluating them by their students' test scores. What is not taken into account, is the fact that many public schools are extremely underfunded and the percentage of students coming from impoverished areas where they may not have adequate learning materials.

More than a week later, an agreement was met which ended the strike. Specifics on the new contracts will be voted on within the next ten days. Did the teachers win the battle? Did Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel? The answer is neither. Rahm plays hardball and didn't back down, but in the long run he lost many supporters over this past week. The teachers wanted what was right and stood up for that. You can't blame them for what was done. It was inevitable. The real winners are the students who are able to get back in school and continue striving toward great futures.