AASCU’s American Democracy Project (ADP) is a multi-campus initiative focused on higher education’s role in preparing the next generation of informed, engaged citizens for our democracy. The project was established in 2003 through a partnership between the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and The New York Times. Since then, ADP has grown to include more than 250 AASCU member colleges and universities, and has helped these institutions and their more than 2.1 million students find ways to create intellectual and experiential understandings of civic engagement. AASCU, its national partners and our participating member institutions designed ADP to imbue graduates with the knowledge, skills and motivation to become involved in and remained committed to lifelong civic action.

Civic Engagement in Action
ADP’s Civic Engagement in Action Series (CEIAS) initiatives allow students to become deeply involved in substantive citizenship issues. A blend of national and campus-centered activities, this effort entails a series of national initiatives that are supported by groups of campuses and national partners. Initiatives are designed to create materials and ideas for campuses to use in promoting civic learning and engagement. Each addresses a critical national issue and includes an examination of the roles of government agencies, advocacy organizations and citizens in trying to address problems and resolve conflicts. Past initiatives include: America’s Financial Future; Civic Engagement in the First Year of College; Deliberative Polling; Electoral Voices—Voter Registration and Education; and The Jury Project.

The current CEIAS initiatives are:

- **Campus and Community Civic Health:** An effort, in partnership with the National Conference on Citizenship, to measure and improve campus and community civic health, by creating a metric through which they can assess civic health and develop plans for areas in need of improvement.

- **Civic Agency:** A partnership with the Center for Democracy and Citizenship, which seeks to produce a series of national models for developing civic agency—a sense of civic efficacy and the ability to take civic action to address a perceived need or problem—among undergraduates.

- **Common Ground—The Stewardship of Public Lands:** “Politics and the Yellowstone Ecosystem” is an annual weeklong seminar in Yellowstone National Park; participating faculty return to campus to incorporate what they have learned into their courses.

- **eCitizenship—New Tools, New Strategies, New Spaces:** With support from Wayne State University’s (Mich.) Center for the Study of Citizenship, this initiative brings together campuses to examine how emerging technologies support and facilitate civic and political engagement, with the goal of using these insights to engage undergraduates.

- **Economic Inequality in Our Democracy:** Our first joint initiative with our community college counterparts in The Democracy Commitment, the goal of this initiative is to help students think about and take action to confront the complex causes of growing economic inequality in the United States.

- **Global Engagement—Educating Globally Competent Citizens:** As participants in ADP’s only internationally focused initiative, global engagement scholars from 11 AASCU campuses have developed strategies, materials and programs to educate globally-competent citizens, including their Global Challenges curricular materials, blended-learning course, eBook and toolkits.

- **Political Engagement Project—Fostering Democratic Participation:** The Political Engagement Project works to develop a sense of political efficacy and responsibility, and equip students with a set of skills with which to engage with the political world.

For more information about ADP, visit [aascu.org/programs/ADP](http://aascu.org/programs/ADP).

### Project Highlights

#### National Programs
- Twelve national Civic Engagement in Action Series initiatives; seven of which are on-going;
- Annual conference held each June;
- Annual Constitution Day activities;
- Annual MLK, Jr. Day activities;
- Annual Stewardship of Public Lands seminar;
- Annual Global Engagement Institute; and the
  - *Journal of Public Affairs* with Missouri State University.

#### Annual Awards
- The Barbara Burch Award honors faculty members with five or more years of leadership in civic learning and engagement;
- The William M. Plater Award honors civic leadership of AASCU chief academic officers; and
- The John Saltmarsh Award for Emerging Leaders in Civic Engagement honors early-career faculty and staff.