

ment teacher at Meadowbrook High School. Winston's classroom is filled with voter registration forms where she and her colleagues frequently help students step-by-step through the process. "This generation is a generation that is waiting for someone to turn on the light bulb of activism," said Winston, whose favorite sayings are "If it's to be, it's up to me" and "Each one, teach one."

With more than 25 years of experience teaching in Chesterfield, Winston remains dedicated to her students this year despite having lost both of her parents in the past five months, and her students appreciate her dedication.

Linda Dakand, a senior in Winston's class, said, "I really admire her, and she is one of my role models. She is very motivational and is interested in your life, not just in the classroom."

Through a leadership project assigned by Winston, Dakand partnered with fellow senior Maab Ibrahim to encourage their peers to vote by setting up a registration table they called "Choose or Lose" during lunch in the cafeteria. "I'm very passionate about young people getting involved in the political process," said Ibrahim, who is applying to Harvard University with Winston's support.

Monacan High School government teacher Laura Dewell also goes above and beyond to get her students registered to vote. She gives students extra credit upon receiving their voter registration card. "I even had quite a few who were 17 register so that they could vote in the primary," says Dewell.

Delroy Walker, a Monacan student in Dewell's class, commented, "In the beginning it was my teacher who got me involved, but then I decided to follow the candidates by reading the paper every day online, listening to NPR and watching the debates. [In Ms. Dewell's class,] we learn how government works, why we need politicians, and why we need to talk about these things. Our class is more debate-focused this year because it's an election year, and that makes it more interesting."

The political season has opened up some friendly discussions among students, particularly when it comes to gender differences. "The guys are saying our country isn't ready for a female president because she would be too emotional," said Monacan student Rachel Robinson.

Election talk isn't just confined to government classes. "Lunch table conversations are focused on the debates, the election results and how we were shocked that Hillary got Texas," said Monacan SGA president, Victoria Bradley, adding that, as a registered Republican who voted for Obama, "It really is about the issues, while party affiliation is the lower end of the spectrum for me."

At Meadowbrook, first-time voter Maurice Tanner said, "I wasn't political until this year when my teacher and parents informed me I had to be a part of the voting community."

Maurice experienced the chaos at Henning Elementary School on primary day. "It seemed disorganized and complicated," he said, describing how he watched Republican

Party voters bypass the long lines while he waited to vote after the precinct ran out of Democratic ballots.

Fellow classmate James Brown encountered a similar experience at his precinct. "I got to Bensley Elementary at about 7 p.m. I waited for two hours before they finally got more Democrat ballots. They tried to make us write down our nominations on pieces of paper (while waiting) but we declined."

For many students, however, the satisfaction of voting for the first time was worth the wait. "You would not have believed the gleam in my students' eyes," said Dewell. "It was like they'd just gotten a new puppy on Christmas morning!"

## Water quality workshop at VSU

Cooperative Extension at Virginia State University (VSU) has scheduled a water quality workshop for anyone interested in learning about water quality management for farm ponds and aquaculture facilities.

Free and open to the public, the workshop will be held on Wed., Apr. 23, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on VSU's Randolph Farm located on River Road in Ettrick.

Participants will learn how water quality affects fish health; about basic water quality parameters for farm ponds and aquaponics systems; and how to use water quality kits for testing purposes. Not only will different types of water quality kits be demonstrated,

but participants will also have a hands-on opportunity to test water quality themselves.

Anyone interested in participating is requested to register by Apr. 16. To register or for more information, contact Dr. David Crosby, VSU fish health specialist, at 524-5620 or dcrosby@vsu.edu.

Anyone needing special services or accommodations in order to participate should call in advance to discuss arrangements.

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### Get registered

To register to vote, a Virginia Voter Registration Application must be completed in full and submitted to the local office of the General Registrar. Application forms are available at any county library, DMV or through any General Registrar's Office. They are also available online at [www.sbe.virginia.gov](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov) or via mail from the county registrar by calling 748-1471. New voters must register by Oct. 6 this year to vote in the presidential election.



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