



## **GOTV Guide**

### **What is the GOTV Guide?**

- GOTV stands for Get Out the Vote—reminding people to vote and get to the polls on Election Day. GOTV can range from low-impact, casual conversation to intense, highly organized door-knock efforts.
- Nonprofit organizations can legally engage in nonpartisan GOTV efforts, and they don't have to be time-consuming or difficult!
- **There are lots of easy, no-cost ways that you can help Get Out the Vote with your organization, and the GOTV Guide is designed to help you do just that.**

### **Why is GOTV important?**

In the 2004 Presidential election, the margin of victory in 11 states was less than 5 percent, showing that every vote counts. This year we want to make sure everyone affected by cancer is getting out the vote and making our voices heard.

GOTV makes our community stronger because it:

- Increases voter turnout and makes democracy work.
- Helps ensure that the people nonprofits work with every day have a say in who will represent them.
- Gives us a chance to continue to talk with people about the issues.
- Ensure that our elected officials truly represent us.

### **What Do I Need to Get Started?**

This GOTV Guide includes dozens of tips and easy templates that you can use or modify to get out the vote.



### Ten *Easy* Ways to Get Out the Vote

*You may not have the time or resources to do a major GOTV effort in your organization, but there are 10 easy ways you can quickly help Get Out the Vote without spending a dime.*

1. Wear yellow on Election Day and talk to people about your cancer experience and what **LIVESTRONG** means to you. Then relate this to the importance of voting.
2. Write an article on why it's important for cancer survivors and advocates to vote. Post it on your personal blog or send it to a local newspaper.
3. Send emails to your staff, members, consumers or clients, board and volunteers encouraging them to vote. (There are sample emails in this packet you can use or modify.)
4. Make a **VOTE TODAY!** sign and place it in your main lobby and other common areas on Election Day with information about polling places.
5. Go around your office and remind your co-workers to **VOTE ON NOVEMBER 4.**
6. Car pool to the polls with co-workers, board members, volunteers or supporters who live in your precinct—on your way to work, on a morning break, on your lunch hour or after work. Offer to give people a ride to the polls. Make it fun and social!
7. Organize a booth before Election Day and educate others on the importance of voting.
8. Put a **NOVEMBER 4—VOTE** message in your email signature so that every email you send reminds people to vote.
9. Organize a "watch party" for any of the debates or for election night.
10. **Take time off on Election Day**—or even part of it!



### Sample Newsletter Article

*Feel free to use this article or parts of it in your next newsletter to promote GOTV.*

#### **Getting Out the Vote—It's Not Just for Candidates Anymore**

This fall the four most important letters for our organization may well be "GOTV," which stands for get out the vote! That means **vote** on November 4, 2008!

Now, you may be thinking that nonprofits can't do GOTV work (because it is election related) so let's start by shattering that myth. *All 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations can legally engage in nonpartisan voter registration, voter education AND Get Out the Vote work.*

Not only is GOTV legal, but it is also crucially important for all nonprofits organizations, because through civic engagement, it helps us fulfill our missions to make cancer a priority issue in our country again. When people vote with cancer issues in mind, those issues are more likely to get the attention they deserve from elected officials.

#### **The Importance of GOTV**

Historically voter turnout has been low in the United States and in the past two Presidential elections; the outcome has been razor thin. In the 2004 Presidential election the margin of victory in 11 states was less than 5 percent, showing that every vote counts. This year is expected to be just as heated and just as close. Your vote could decide the outcome of the 2008 election.

#### **The Unique Role of Nonprofits**

People are angry about politics. Many don't trust candidates of any party. Others think voting doesn't make a difference. We can counter this cynicism and apathy. We can have honest, nonpartisan conversations with each other, our clients, board, volunteers, donors and other supporters about why voting matters.

Because we are nonpartisan, we can cut through the clutter of partisan politics and talk about the issues, so that the people we talk with are better able to vote with those issues in mind on November 4.

#### **GOTV Made Easy Two Tips for Effective GOTV**

1. Personally Ask Others to Vote: Don't assume that your friends, family members and colleagues are going to vote; **MAKE SURE** they do! Call or email them a quick reminder. Personal contact before and on Election Day is critical to persuading people to vote.
2. Take Time Off on Election Day: The final and most important way to ensure that people vote is to talk to them on Election Day.



### **Get Out the Vote the Electronic Way**

*Email reminders can be a quick, easy and cheap way to remind your staff, board, volunteers, members and supporters to vote. Repeated reminders from people a voter trusts make it more likely that the voter will go to the polls on Election Day. Consider sending emails during the month leading up to November 4. Some samples are detailed below:*

#### ***OCTOBER 15***

*Subject Line:* November 4 Countdown—21 Days Left

*Email Body:* In the 2004 Presidential election the margin of victory in 11 states was less than 5 percent, showing that every vote counts. This year we want to make sure everyone gets out the vote.

Remember to VOTE on NOVEMBER 4 ... and remind your clients, friends, family and co-workers.

#### ***OCTOBER 29***

*Subject Line:* November 4 Countdown—7 Days Left

*Email Body:* What's scarier than Halloween ghosts and goblins?

Our leaders being elected by a minority of the people!

Next Tuesday, November 4, is Election Day. Remember:

- The polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. To find your polling place, go to <http://www.vote411.org/pollingplacebystate.php>.
- Bring your ID to the polls.
- VOTE on NOVEMBER 4!

#### ***NOVEMBER 3***

*Subject Line:* November 3 Countdown—One More Day

*Email Body:* Tomorrow we have the chance to vote with cancer in mind.



Voting helps us advance our mission and improve the well-being of our communities.

It's your vote ... It's your voice. On November 4, make your choice. PLEASE VOTE!

#### ***NOVEMBER 4***

*Subject Line:* IT'S NOVEMBER 4! VOTE TODAY!

*Email Body:* Take your ID and get to the polls TODAY to cast your vote. Polling places are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

- To find your polling place, go to <http://www.vote411.org/pollingplacebystate.php>.

GET OUT AND VOTE



### **Important Election Contact Information**

*On Election Day or before, there are many resources available to answer your questions or help you vote at the polls. Here is one to keep handy:*

To find a local polling place in your area. Go to <http://www.vote411.org>.

### **The 2008 Presidential Candidates**

Democratic Presidential Nominee  
Barack Obama

<http://www.barackobama.com/>

Republican Presidential Nominee  
John McCain

<http://www.johnmccain.com/>

### **The Parties**

Democratic Party

<https://www.democrats.org>

Republican Party

<http://www.gop.com>

### **Cancer Awareness Websites**

The Lance Armstrong Foundation

<http://livestrong.org>

StandUp2Cancer

<http://www.standup2cancer.org/>

National Cancer Institute

<http://www.cancer.gov/>