

## LEADERSHIP TENNESSEE TO LEAD "VOTE TENNESSEE" EFFORT

"Project Register" to Become "Vote Tennessee," a Statewide Initiative to Increase Voter Registration and Education

NASHVILLE – Leadership Tennessee, the state's preeminent leadership organization, will lead "Vote Tennessee," a statewide effort to increase voter registration and education.

"Vote Tennessee" began as Project Register, a nonpartisan initiative launched in 2017 by U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper (D-Tennessee) and State Sen. Steve Dickerson (R-Nashville) to boost voter registration in Middle Tennessee.

Committed to collaborative, nonpartisan dialogue, Leadership Tennessee is a natural fit to take this project across all three Grand Divisions as Tennessee ranks 45th in the country in voter registration and 49th in voter turnout.

"Tennessee's voting statistics are not representative of the engaged democracy we strive to be, but there are a number of good things happening to encourage more Tennesseans to register and turnout on Election Day," Cathy Cate, executive director of Leadership Tennessee said. "We want to thank Rep. Cooper, Sen. Dickerson and their staff for establishing an excellent framework of focusing registration efforts where Tennesseans live, work, learn and play, and we look forward to working with many partners across the state to make sure Tennesseans are registered, well-informed and exercising their right to vote."

Vote Tennessee works with businesses, nonprofits, neighborhoods, higher education institutions and other organizations to encourage voter registration. More than 838,000 Tennesseans are not registered to vote. More information on Vote Tennessee can be found at [www.votetennessee.org](http://www.votetennessee.org).

"We are thankful for all of our Middle Tennessee community participants who have made this program the success that is, but now is the time for this nonpartisan initiative to go statewide," Cooper said. "Voting is our most significant right as Americans, and we believe employers and other organizations across Tennessee stand ready to help improve Tennesseans' civic participation."

"In the November 2018 election that saw a double digit increase in voter participation, statewide, Davidson County saw an 82 percent increase. While Project Register can't take full credit, focusing on registering voters at a systemic level in Middle Tennessee can make a significant difference in engagement, making our democracy healthier and more vibrant," Dickerson said.

In September 2017, Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett unveiled GoVoteTN, the Tennessee online voter registration system after the Tennessee General Assembly approved online voter registration in 2016.

Leadership Tennessee, an initiative of the College of Leadership and Public Service at Lipscomb University, is an organization committed to collaborative, non-partisan dialogue on issues of statewide importance by crossing over geographic and professional boundaries and connecting a diverse network of problem solvers and engaged citizens. A new class of 40 leaders is selected annually to take part in a leadership study course while visiting different areas of Tennessee, learning best practices and analyzing important issues faced by Tennesseans. To date, 250 leaders have gone through the program.

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