

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**October 10, 2019**

**Ryerson on-campus advance voting breaks records, bolstered by student voter engagement campaign**

**Toronto, ON** - Over five days of on-campus advance voting at Ryerson University, 2,365 people cast their ballots, breaking records and representing a 61% increase from the previous federal election.

Ryerson Votes, a student run campaign supported by The Democratic Engagement Exchange at Ryerson's Faculty of Arts (The Exchange), used a digital and face-to-face engagement strategy to encourage students to vote early on campus. The Ryerson Votes campaign is a local test case for The Exchange's national non-partisan voter engagement campaign, The Canadian Vote Coalition. Ryerson Votes uses the same tools and methods as the Coalition network.

Led by students Taylor Deasley and Aysha Anwar, Ryerson Votes kicked off at the end of August during student orientation.

"Social media is an effective tool for supplying people with practical information, but it was the face-to-face interaction that really brought people in," said Deasley. "We talked to thousands of students, many of whom had lots of questions for us. Many were eager to vote, they just needed to be equipped with the right information." Deasley hopes the high voter turnout will challenge the perception that youth are not politically engaged.

On the last day of on-campus voting, students were undeterred by long lines at the polls, with some waiting for as much as an hour. As polls closed at 10pm, there were still many in line.

"We are thrilled with record breaking turnout on-campus," said John Beebe, Director of the Exchange. "Millennials are now the largest voting block, and we've witnessed their civic engagement over the last year through protests and rallies. The turnout we're seeing at Ryerson shows that young people are ready to take their engagement from the streets to the polls. If high turnout is replicated at campuses across Canada, it will be a bellwether for the millennial vote on October 21."

This is the second federal election that Elections Canada has set up polling locations at colleges and universities across Canada. Elections Canada will be reporting on national campus turnout.

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**The Democratic Engagement Exchange** at Ryerson University's Faculty of Arts is building a vibrant and inclusive democracy where everyone living in Canada can contribute. The Exchange equips non-profits, government agencies, funders and grassroots leaders with the

knowledge and tools they need to foster democratic engagement. [Learn more at engagedemocracy.ca](http://engagedemocracy.ca).

The [Canadian Vote Coalition](#) is the largest non-partisan voter engagement campaign in Canada's history. Led by The Exchange and Apathy is Boring, the network of 700+ local organizations and leaders have committed to breaking down barriers to participation and demystifying the voting process ahead of the 2019 federal election.

**Attached photo credits:**

First time voters, John Beebe, The Democratic Engagement Exchange  
Ryerson Votes Volunteers, Paige Deasley, Ryerson Student

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