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Local

Sojourner-Douglass College one of few schools in country to offer campaign management major

Mike Silvestri, The Examiner

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BALTIMORE -

The overwhelming enthusiasm about this year's presidential campaign has sparked [Sojourner-Douglass College](#) to become one of the few schools in the country to allow students to major in political campaign management.

Officials of the predominantly black, [Baltimore](#)-based school said it has for years seen a need for campaign managers who can help produce better public officials. But the explosion of interest in this year's presidential race, mostly around Sens. [Barack Obama](#) and [Hillary Clinton](#), and improving campaign technology, pushed the college to take advantage of the timing and offer the program.

"What we want to do is mobilize the community," said [Charles Simmons](#), president of the college.

"Not only do we need smart and strong politicians, but dedicated to a cause, not afraid of risking their position as a politician to bring about change. Far too often we have politicians who get in and fall in love with the process, with being a politician, and don't want to rock the boat."

Only three or four other schools in the country allow students to major in political campaign management, officials at the school said. Sojourner-Douglass will offer certificates as well as bachelor's and master's degrees.

The courses will be nonpartisan and topics will include ethics, campaign themes, technology, fundraising, grassroots organizing, speech writing and election analysis.

[J.C. Watts](#), a former Republican congressman from [Oklahoma](#) who now contributes analysis for [CNN](#), and [Donna Brazile](#), a Democrat who became the first black woman to manage a presidential campaign when she ran [Al Gore](#)'s in 2000, are among the high-profile political players who have expressed interest in lecturing, Simmons said.

[Maryland Attorney General Douglas Gansler](#), who, at a news conference Tuesday announcing the program, recalled how difficult it was for him to learn how to run a campaign, is also expected to give guest lectures.

When he first sought office in 1992 in the [U.S.](#) attorney's office in [Washington D.C.](#), Gansler went to the library to learn how to make a successful push. He found no books about campaign management and was forced to learn by doing.

"There really are no guidebooks, no lessons, no teachers," Gansler said.

"I really do believe this program will provide just that: People who have a knowledge of political campaigns."

msilvestri@baltimoreexaminer.com

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