



## Connecticut Civic Ambassadors Initiative

### ***The Connecticut Civic Ambassadors Initiative: what are Civic Ambassadors?***

Part of a new initiative being launched in June 2017, “Civic Ambassadors”<sup>1</sup> are everyday people who care about and engage others in their communities by creating opportunities for civic participation that strengthen our state’s “civic health.”<sup>2</sup> They also use the findings in the *2016 Connecticut Civic Health Index* report to inform others about the importance of civic participation.

### ***What can Civic Ambassadors do?***

Civic Ambassadors are non-partisan agents of change who can build a movement for civic renewal by...

- Inspiring, motivating, and empowering others to be engaged. Renowned author and speaker Eric Liu would refer to them as “supercarriers” of the civic participation “contagion.”
- Bringing civic health information and ideas for civic action back to their communities--through a group they belong to; by speaking at campuses, community events, and institutions; by organizing volunteering and other civic events locally; etc.
- Planning or hosting local community conversations with partner organizations and leaders on “*what does civic health look like in my city/town?*” *what steps can we take to strengthen civic health together?* *What does improving civic health in our community look like? How can we create spaces for listening to each other and working together?*

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<sup>1</sup> *The Connecticut Civic Ambassadors Initiative is modeled after Nebraskans for Civic Reform’s own “Civic Health Ambassadors” initiative launched in 2015. It has led to hundreds of civic leaders in that state becoming ambassadors who carry the message of the power of civic participation and engage others in meaningful ways*

<sup>2</sup> *“Civic Health” is determined by how well diverse groups of residents work together and with government to solve public problems and strengthen their communities.*

- Developing and implementing action-plans derived from the local conversations and “listening sessions.”
- Tracking, documenting, and sharing information about their work and the ways in which stronger civic participation is becoming a priority in their communities: *are civic actions incorporated in community planning? Has an organization embraced civic participation as a key part of its work? Are schools getting parents and students engaged in new ways?*
- Participating with other civic ambassadors across the state in a “Civic Ambassadors Summit” where they learn more about civic health, talk about successes and challenges, increase the visibility of their local work, leverage more resources and partnerships, and build a movement for civic renewal in Connecticut!

### ***How will Civic Ambassadors be able to do that?***

In November of 2017, the Connecticut Civic Health Project will sponsor a “Civic Ambassadors Summit” at which civic ambassadors will be given an orientation, participate in a training session, be sworn in, and receive a *Civic Ambassadors Toolkit*.

With the toolkit, they’ll be able to:

- Plan, host, and facilitate community conversations and “listening sessions” that lead to civic action. The toolkit will include sample agendas with discussion questions for the local conversations, event planning sheets, facilitation resources available through Everyday Democracy, action step charts, etc.
- Communicate effectively with others about civic health and Connecticut’s civic health findings, the importance of civic participation, and how they can be part of a movement for civic renewal in Connecticut. The toolkit will include talking points and media lists.
- Plan and organize local civic activities—food and clothing drives, neighborhood cleanups, community gardens, volunteer drives, blood drives, “walkathons,” neighborhood watch programs, etc. that engage their neighbors or peers.

### ***Who can become a civic ambassador and what is the time commitment?***

Any Connecticut resident who strongly believes that engaging others in community and public life strengthens our state’s civic health and promotes community well-being can be a civic ambassador. They can be elementary school children, high school or college youth, young adults, adults, or senior citizens—age is not a factor! Civic ambassadors devote at least one hour each week, as their schedules allow, to performing their civic duties.

### ***How can I learn more about and sign-up to become a Civic Ambassador?***

For more information and to sign-up, contact Mr. **Valeriano Ramos** at Everyday Democracy: (860) 727-5917 or [vramos@everyday-democracy.org](mailto:vramos@everyday-democracy.org). Check out the initiative’s new FACEBOOK page at: LINK