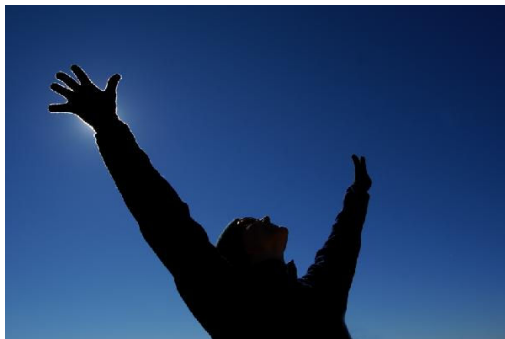


Newsletter

February 2008

Dear Amy,



There's a lot to be active in this month and this spring!

Get involved with the School Inequities Project and improve your school and schools around the city!

Vote in the upcoming election or volunteer with the campaign of the candidate of your choice!

Keep posted on the YAN radio appearance!

What's In It For You

:: School Inequities Project is GO!

:: Election Updates

:: YAN Radio Appearance

:: Meeting of the Minds - High School Redesign

School Inequities Project is GO!

Written by Maya Gaster



In December's YAN Newsletter, JoAnna Clasberry wrote an article informing us about the School Inequities Project that was going to be compiled and

YAN Radio Appearance

By Tommy Watson

Youth Action Network is going to be on KAZI's (FM 88.7) "Educating Our Children" on

Monday, March 31, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

talking about the School Inequities Project and the Austin Voices class at Garza High School. It will be



presented by Austin Voices employees and volunteers this spring. At this point, the YAN squad and other Austin Voices Alliance Teams at AISD high schools are working furiously to put together an Action Project that School Board officials will not be able to look away from.

Our goals for the final product of the presentation include photographic evidence from every AISD high school of facilities (such as bathrooms, sports fields, classrooms, band instruments, etc.) as well as interviews with students and teachers to supplement these pictures. Our aim is to inspire the educational community (from students and parents all the way up to elected officials on our AISD School Board) to equip ALL of our schools with the resources and quality education that all AISD students deserve.

If you are a student at a high school in Austin, Texas, this message is for you: let your voice be heard! This project is meant to highlight the good and bad aspects of all public schools in this district. Without student help and input from each of these schools, our project will not be as reputable as it could be. This project needs to be as honest and objective as possible in order to put pressure on elected officials to make a positive change in our public

awesome. It all started about a month ago; I wrote some e-mails, made some phone calls, did a bit of waiting, and it worked out. We will be on many more radio shows in the future.

Please tune in and listen!

Partnership for a Better Future

By Brooke Fowler

On January 24, 2008, the "Meeting of the Minds" for High School Redesign occurred. The Hispanic Chamber of



Commerce, Austin Voices for Education and Youth, and the Urban League have a partnership with AISD in the High School Redesign initiative funded by the Gates Foundation.

The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce first began their mentor program at Johnston three years ago. The mentors help the students with so many things such as college prep, schedule planning, and attendance. The program has been so successful; they have already started planning to expand to Travis and Lanier High Schools.

The Stand Up clubs through Austin Voices are constantly at work on Action Projects. Students have a voice in their education. The clubs at Akins and Johnston High Schools created "Teacher Profile Booklets" that tell about each teacher in order to encourage a more personable school environment and improve student-teacher relationships. The Youth Action for Educational Change class at Garza Independence High School makes up the team who publishes this newsletter. Austin Voices implements the Life Skills Curriculum in Middle Schools as well as holds Community Conversations that provide a space for school officials,

schools.

I am writing this article as a challenge to any high school student who rants and/or raves about their school's bathrooms, science labs, or sports equipment!

Do something great for the students in this city and get volunteer hours for contributing to a great cause by joining the Austin Voices Alliance Team at your AISD high school. (It looks great on a college application or resume, too!) To get involved, email me at mayagaster@gmail.com and help us make this project a success!

How the Candidates Will (try to) Win You Over

By Maya DiTraglia

As we've all seen in presidential election years, candidates shape their campaigns around what they believe will appeal to the most voters. The result is a message from each candidate with a central theme that they feel is most important to most Americans at the time. For example, if a candidate feels that Americans are worried predominantly about terrorism, they will focus their race on how they will combat terrorism. Aside from building themselves up though, the candidates will almost always resort to tearing each other down with mud slinging (waging truths or fallacies against an opponent to weaken their reputation). We are already seeing both phenomena happen for the 2008 race for president and it is

parents, teachers, and students to engage in topics such as closing the gaps to graduation.



The Life Skills Program, Youth Empowerment, and Counseling are just a few of the services the Urban League provides. Many opportunities and instruction are provided to young people. They tutor, train, and even have speakers come to high schools to teach students how their education will be applied in the work force and inspire young people to achieve.

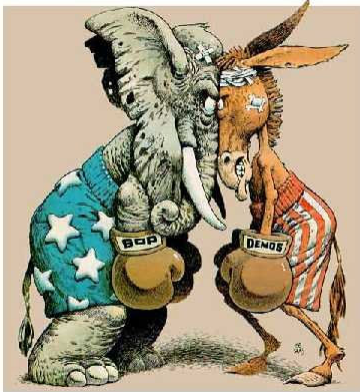
During the meeting, Luis Orozco, the leader of the Stand Up club at Lanier talked about making the advisory classes held at high schools truly beneficial to students. "If teachers can get more involved with students, advisory would be better". This intention is what will make Austin Voices' vision come true: "One day all schools and neighborhoods in Austin will be a great place for young people to learn, lead, connect, work and thrive. Students will not simply be recipients of service, they will become agents of change, leading the reformation of our schools and communities."

Unprecedented

By Tyler Avey

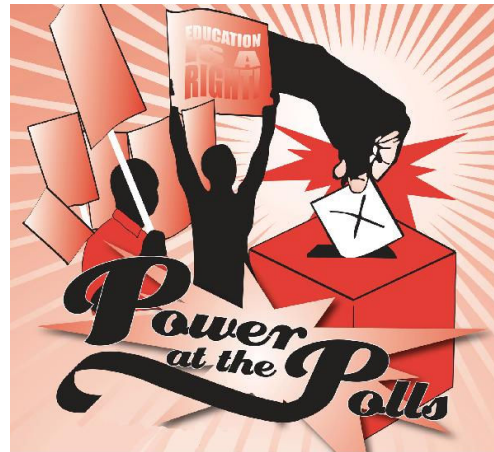
As we progress through the presidential nomination process, one thing remains clear; this year's race is unpredictable. The last time Texas helped decide a presidential nominee was 1988, when Democrat Michael Dukakis received the majority of votes and delegates from Texas, with Jesse Jackson coming in second. Dukakis would eventually end up with the most delegates and win the

important to recognize how each candidate is winning your vote.



On the Democratic side, Hillary Clinton uses her past experience in politics to claim that she is the most qualified candidate for president. For example, after receiving an endorsement from an Iowa newspaper called The Des Moines Register, Clinton came out with an ad stating that her activism as a young woman, her diplomatic activities with foreign leaders as First Lady, and her effectiveness as a legislator in the Senate are part of "Every stage of her life [that] has prepared her for the presidency." Barack Obama emphasizes change and hope more than any other candidate in order to reach the working class and impassion the youth. In particular, Obama asserts that "there is not a liberal America and a conservative America, there is the United States of America", and that he will finally unify the polarized nation. Additionally, Obama pledges to deteriorate the corruption present in Washington by turning away corporate lobbyists. Lastly, former candidate John Edwards was extremely adamant about being the voice of the middle/working class. In one television ad, Edwards claimed that, "born to humble beginnings in South Carolina, he [has] spent his life

Democratic nomination.



This year's race marks the first time since 1928 an incumbent (already in office) president or vice president has not appeared on the ballot. With no incumbents this race has taken on a curious narrative, with no clear frontrunner on either side. Usually by Super Tuesday (February 5th), a date in which 22 states voted, a candidate has picked up enough delegates to be considered the winner of the nomination. Though the Republicans came out with John McCain in the lead the Democrats are still neck and neck between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. John Edwards has dropped out, as has Mitt Romney.

With primaries held on March 4th, Texas has a great chance to play a pivotal part in crowning a nominee, the state



controls about 17% of total delegates in both parties. As in all of the primaries and caucuses thus far, a record turnout is expected in Texas. These races have also brought out a higher than expected youth vote which is encouraging for the progression of government in America. If you're 18, vote in the Texas primaries in March because we as youth can shape the history of our nation in this election.

fighting against the rich and powerful to help the kind of regular people he grew up with."

On the Republican side, John McCain is a strong advocate of national security and of being an asset to the military. He often describes his experience as a Prisoner of War to show the American public that he has empathy for men and women in the military. He also means to exhibit his patriotism by declaring his love for America in many ads. Mitt Romney maintains that his experience running a business and managing the 2002 winter Olympics in Salt Lake City will translate into directing a stimulated economy for America. He especially stresses the plan of "new, permanent income tax reductions" that will allegedly invigorate the economy. Mike Huckabee is the candidate that seems to capitalize on his personal character the most, appealing to people interested in the family values he has obtained while being a Baptist minister. In fact, Huckabee runs an ad that shows several people vouching for his "compassionate" nature.

On the negative side of campaigning, rumors have already been started by candidates against each other. The program, "NOW" on PBS recently broadcasted a show titled "Dirty Politics 2008" that exposed some of the latest smear tactics. E-mails have been circulated accusing Hillary Clinton of lesbian affairs and even murder while others attack Mitt Romney for his Mormon faith. To ignite people's current fear of Islam, blogs and websites have claimed that Barack Obama is simply pretending to be a Christian and is actually part of the Muslim plan to "destroy the US from the inside

out." Whatever tactics are used though, it will ultimately come down to how many voters each candidate will inspire and how many of those will actually show up to the polls. Remember, the youth vote can possibly make or break the election!

[Forward email](#)

 **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to aaverett@austinvoices.org, by akay@austinvoices.org
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Austin Voices for Education and Youth | 3710 Cedar St. | Suite 229, box 21 | Austin | TX | 78705