

Gilbert School students want to be inspiration for voters

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WINSTED — Packs of Gilbert School students dressed in orange armbands will scour the town this weekend.

They won't be looking for your leftover Halloween candy. They will be looking for your votes.

About 20 students are expected to participate in a canvass sponsored by the community lawyer's office with the goal of prompting higher voter turnout.

Jamie Scrimgeour, an associate in the community lawyer's office, said the students, who will carry voting lists as they make their rounds, will ask residents if they are registered to vote.

If they are, the students will ask them to exercise their right to vote on Nov. 5. If they are not registered, the students will ask them to sign up to vote in the next election, Scrimgeour said.

Gilbert senior Jaime A. Irick said he is looking forward to hiking around Winsted's side streets asking residents to vote.

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Gilbert to help in vote drive

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"I think it is really important for people to vote," he said. "I don't know what it is like to vote but I don't know how people could just sit at home when they have the right to vote and the opportunity to vote."

Scrimgeour said the community lawyer's office was prompted to take action in light of the fact that the past three local elections have drawn only 51 percent of registered voters to the polls.

Winsted has traditionally drawn about 60 percent of its registered voters. That is too low, Scrimgeour said.

The canvass hopes to prompt about 70 percent of registered voters to cast their votes.

Scrimgeour said his office chose to ask high school students to help because they do not have a vote and "if people see these students are making an effort, it may bring a renewed enthusiasm in the democratic process."

"Around the world we see all these countries revive their democracies and it is about time we did the same for ours," he said.

Scrimgeour said the effort seeks to return the power to the voters by giving them more of a say in government.

"I think we are trying to make voters understand that voting is not a right, it is a duty," he said.