

## Student voters could mean the difference between Aycock and Wilcox

Written by

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Candidates aren't the only ones out in the cold today to solicit votes.

Appalachian State University students have gotten in on the action in Boone. University Democrats have had contact tables in the student union and have had a busy day, student activist Jonathan Fortinbury says.

"If you live in an area, especially for students who are going to be going to school here for the next four years, they should be able to vote in anything they want to vote in."

In a race where 4 votes separated Liz Aycock and Dempsey Wilcox, students have made all the difference. In October's election, Aycock led the ASU precincts. Since the contested conclusion, area activists have discussed students' roles in local elections. Some have gone so far as to say students living on campus should not be allowed to vote.

It was an issue early on in Boone's Municipal Race. Mayor Loretta Clawson brought up Citizens for Change activist David Blust's stance during a forum held at ASU in September.

"The leader of this PAC, David Blust, has said that students should not be allowed to vote. Look it up. Beware these people that say they're citizens for change," she said.

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Student activists don't seem to care what anyone says- they're voting.

"We've been trying to tell students you live here, you might as well vote here... and a lot of students don't vote in national elections because they don't think their vote will count. Liz won in the last thing and beat Dempsey Wilcox by four votes and definitely student votes were the ones to help her get that edge."

Fortinbury isn't the only student who feels that way. Forrest Gilliam, a prominent activist on campus, also thinks students should make their voices heard.

"They should be encouraged and they may vote the way you want them to, they may not, but the point is they're a part of the town and they live here and they feel things that come down the line and they have every right to vote."

After all, in a race where 4 votes can separate winners and losers, there's no question that individual votes can make a difference.