

W&L's 26th Mock Convention Feb. 11-13 May Clarify GOP Presidential Race

| A college mock political convention that has correctly predicted the actual nominee in 19 of 25 presidential elections since 1908 convenes Feb. 11-13 at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia.

Every four years, "Mock Con" nominates the ticket of the party out of power. This year, more than 1,500 W&L undergraduates will take part as delegates in a mock Republican convention. The student organizers have raised nearly half a million dollars to research actual party procedures, book high-level political speakers, create a convention hall and even hold an opening parade through downtown Lexington featuring floats and 56 state and voting territory delegations.

Former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich will address the mock convention, as will Kristen Anderson, pollster and author of "The Selfie Vote: Where Millennials Are Leading America (And How Republicans Can Keep Up)"; Grover Norquist, founder and president of Americans for Tax Reform; Ed Gillespie, former chairman of the Republican National Committee and counselor to the president in the George W. Bush administration; and others.

Andrew McCaffery, general chair, believes Mock Con refutes the notion that young Americans are politically disengaged and uninformed.

"In an election cycle that has been tumultuous and at times trivialized, Mock Convention offers a breath of fresh air in that it showcases electoral analysis and engagement by young people. These students are truly excited to participate in presidential politics and this esteemed university tradition," McCaffery said.

Mock Con opens Feb. 11 at 5 p.m. with a presidential issues debate and resumes Feb. 12 at 9:30 a.m. with the Delegates' Parade through downtown Lexington. Four convention sessions featuring speakers, presentations and voting take place Feb. 12-13. The entire event will be livestreamed at www.wlu.edu. The public also can attend in person, and general admission tickets are for sale online at www.mockconvention.com.