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## **Rock the Vote Kicks off 2012 Election Cycle with “Rock the Caucus” at Iowa high schools statewide**

### ***Top Republican Presidential hopefuls attend to win support of the youth vote***

Washington DC – Today Rock the Vote kicks off the 2012 Presidential election cycle with “Rock the Caucus” events at high schools across the state of Iowa.

Rock the Caucus, a partnership with the Iowa Secretary of State’s office, aims to engage young Iowans in the caucus process to ensure they are registering to vote and participating in the 2012 election. For Iowa’s youngest voters, this is the first opportunity to vote and a chance to be part of something truly historic and influential. Today, Rock the Caucus will prepare thousands of 17- and 18 year-olds in Iowa to participate in the elections process.

“We will be running mock caucuses, getting students registered to vote, and educating and preparing them to participate in 2012. We are thrilled to kick off the 2012 election cycle in Iowa,” said Heather Smith, President of Rock the Vote.

“We are excited to be a part of this joint effort with Rock the Vote to educate, engage, and mobilize a new generation of voters in Iowa,” stated Iowa Secretary of State Matt Schultz.

Top Republican candidates are scheduled to attend the featured Rock the Caucus forum at West Des Moines Valley High School, including Congressman Ron Paul, Senator Rick Santorum, and Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, along with Mitt Romney’s sons Tagg, Matt, Josh, and Craig. They will speak to more than 800 students about why they deserve their vote. Iowa Democratic Party Chair Sue Dvorsky will also be present to make the case for President Obama.

“It is important that candidates hear from young people about their concerns for their future and prioritize them within their campaigns,” explains Smith. “The candidate that figures out how to address the issues and frustrations of young Americans in a meaningful way is going to earn their vote in 2012.”

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The candidates are smart to target young voters. Iowa has a long tradition of young voter participation, producing the second highest turnout of voters ages 18-29 in the nation in 2008. The youth vote in the 2008 Iowa Caucuses propelled both Republican Mike Huckabee and Democrat Barack Obama to victory. Because they comprise nearly a quarter of the voting population, young people are poised to play a powerful role in 2012 in Iowa and nationwide.

In 2012, Rock the Vote will run the largest nonpartisan voter registration campaign in the country focused on engaging, registering, and turning out young Americans to vote. Rock the Vote's election campaign will aim to register 1.5 million young people through national online and offline efforts, launching in Iowa with the Rock the Caucus events.

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### **About Rock the Vote**

[www.rockthevote.com](http://www.rockthevote.com)

*Rock the Vote's mission is to engage and build political power for young people in our country. Using music, popular culture, new technologies, and grassroots organizing for more than 20 years, Rock the Vote has registered more than 5 million young people, including a record-shattering 2.25 million registration downloads in the historic 2008 election. As the tidal wave of Millennial Generation voters continues to establish its power at the polls, Rock the Vote will register millions more young people and make their voices heard.*