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**BOOK REVEALS YOUTH ARE MOTIVATED & INTERESTED IN CIVICS,
BUT LACK OPTIONS TO GET INVOLVED**

**Profiles Proven Programs, Policies that Enhance Youth Civic Engagement;
Interviews with Authors, Call David Roscow at 703-276-2772 x21**

Tisch College, Tufts University - Defying the stereotype of political apathy, today's youth have proven their interest in civic matters through successive high voter turnout rates since 2004. However, our society is not providing young people enough opportunities to enhance civic learning and to form lasting civic identities, according to a new book edited by James Youniss and Peter Levine.

"Engaging Young People in Civic Life" documents a series of successful civic education programs and policies and serves as a manual on how to best create opportunities for civic engagement among young Americans. These programs are not only in schools, but also in municipal governments, political parties, and nonprofits. The book addresses the dilemma that underprivileged young people are less likely to be involved in civics than their counterparts, partly because schools in low-income areas place diminished emphasis on civic education and typically have weak forms of student government. The authors say to reduce the gap we must invest more resources targeted to disadvantaged youth because early years are formative.

Levine, director of the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts University's Tisch College, said persuading youth to vote, volunteer, follow the news, and take a personal interest in societal issues is key to creating a more active and successful society.

"The importance of youth involvement in the political sphere through civic engagement opportunities should not be overlooked," said Levine. "By increasing youth interest and activity, we will find creative minds that can address our most serious problems. America needs people with fresh perspectives who can better our communities and incite responsibility and passion in those around them."

The book contains 13 original essays based on research on youth civic engagement opportunities. Chapters focus on successful programs and policies within and outside American schools. The book also profiles programs in Western Europe and Canada, where immigration and income inequality affect civic engagement.

Former U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.), who authored the introduction to the book and co-chairs the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, wrote "I can think of no task more important for the future of American democracy than teaching young people about our system of government and encouraging them to get involved in politics and community." He called the book "a plea to revive American democracy by offering all of our young people the civic opportunities they want and so richly deserve."

Youniss, a psychology professor at the Catholic University of America, said it is important for people to develop a civic identity at an early age. "People are likely to care more about their community if they are involved in the issues surrounding it," Youniss said. "By reaching out to youth, we are encouraging them to take pride in their communities, which can help them to develop leadership skills and live active, fulfilling lives."

The book shows young people should be viewed as assets, not problems for dealing with many of society's most

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pressing issues. In the final chapters, the authors provide a series of concrete policy recommendations targeted at schools, communities and government to enhance civic engagement opportunities for young people.

Levine hopes the book encourages society to reach out to its younger generations. “For society to flourish, all members must contribute in some way that’s meaningful to them and those around,” he said. “This book provides ideas that can make these goals become reality.”

Note to media: Complimentary copies of the book are available please call David Roscow at 703-276-2772 x21 or email him at dave@tricomassociates.com

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***CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement)** conducts and promotes research on the civic and political engagement of Americans between the ages of 15 and 25. A part of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University, CIRCLE has received funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts, Carnegie Corporation of New York and several other foundations.*

***The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service**, a national leader in civic engagement, prepares students from all fields of Tufts University to become engaged public citizens and community leaders.*

***Tufts University**, located on three Massachusetts campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville, and Grafton, and in Talloires, France, is recognized as one of the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the University’s schools is widely encouraged.*