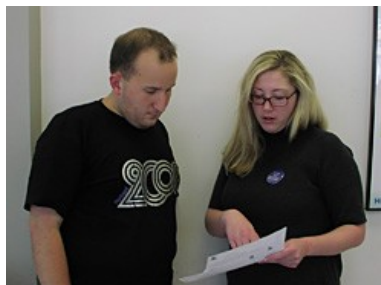


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## FAIRFIELD STUDENT SPEARHEADS HCC ELECTION INFORMATION EFFORTS



*CUTLINE: HCC student Kaitlyn Shake of Fairfield (right) reviews information about Presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain with fellow HCC student Fernando Moura of Bridgeport. For hi-res photo contact Anson Smith.*

BRIDGEPORT – For Fairfield student Kaitlyn Shake, there's a dearth of irrelevant information out there about the presidential tickets.

So she and some classmates, many of them members of the college's Women's Center, decided to do something about it. Using information gleaned from the Washington Post and the website [procon.org](http://procon.org), they assembled fact sheets about candidates Barack Obama and John McCain, and distributed them Thursday (9/25) in the Housatonic Community College cafeteria.

"There doesn't seem to be too much clarity among students about the issues," she said. "On television, they're being bombarded with comments about Sarah Palin and her lipstick.

For people to make an informed rational decision that will have the most positive impact, people must know the issues, Shake said.

"The actual issues that are important, such as the economy, national service, social security, stem cell research, and health care, are being overshadowed by things that will not have a direct affect on us," she said.

With the college ramping up for Election Day with voter registration drives and election participation activities, she said, the time to address the situation is now.

Shake, who considers herself a student activist, feels that, with the American form of republican democracy, people should stand up for what they believe in and be counted. "Change is possible," she said, "and change can be beneficial if it is carried out properly."

For this reason, Shake said, at a meeting of the Women's Center members, she raised the question of holding an information drive. After researching the subject, the group decided to go ahead with the project.

Thursday, Sept. 25, was the day they decided upon. Joining Shake in the cafeteria Thursday were Women's Center member Shirley Johansson of Bridgeport and friend Steven Smyers of Stratford.

Shake feels the information drive was a success. "We found that people are interested in the issues and that they are receptive to information about the candidates."

Judging the information drive a success, what will be the next project for Shake?

"I'm going to suggest that we do the same thing with the vice presidential candidates," she said.

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