



## ***Civil Political Discussion ISN'T a Thing of the Past: Democracy Plaza***

***What do pizza, free speech and civility have in common? [Democracy Plaza](#).***



This space and student organization is centered on creating opportunities for free speech, civil dialogue and civic engagement in our community. You can get involved with Democracy Plaza by attending our events or applying to become one of our members (and in exchange earn a \$750 scholarship)!

In mid-October, as the aroma of pizza wafts through the Campus Center, over 100 IUPUI students, staff and faculty gathered in a tight circle to discuss the 'Occupy Wall Street' protests that have been going on around the country for over the past month. And, if you can believe it, this happened with an air of civility and respect for all of those who chose to voice their concerns, opinions or thoughts on the events of 'Occupy Wall Street'. This opportunity for dialogue and deliberation on today's most pressing political ideas and issues is the reason Democracy Plaza continues to be a unique presence in the IUPUI community.



In 2004, as a reaction to the political environment after the 2000 and 2004 elections, a group of IUPUI students came together to create the space and student organization, Democracy Plaza. The free-speech space would eventually become 22 chalkboards outside, underneath the Business/SPEA building where our community can write their reactions to questions posed by our student organization. In addition, this is a place for our community to host events centered on our mission statement "to support the development of well-informed and engaged students through critical-thinking and civil discourse on political ideas and issues." These events can range from art installations—such as the "Eyes Wide Open" exhibit we just hosted on the casualties of war—to our signature event "Pass the Mic". Our signature event, "Pass the Mic" allows for our community to have the time and space to talk about gay marriage, legalizing marijuana and the morality of stem-cell research, as well as issues surrounding education, free speech or gun rights (just to name a few topics that we have covered since 2004).

- If you would like to get involved with, collaborate with, or become a member of Democracy Plaza we have plenty of ways for you to get plugged in!
- This month we have many events planned that you can attend—for more information on these events please visit our website, <https://dplaza.usg.iupui.edu>.
- If your campus group or classroom would like to plan an event with Democracy Plaza or reserve our Plaza for your event please email us at [dplaza@iupui.edu](mailto:dplaza@iupui.edu).
- If you want to know more about becoming a member that can help us create quality events centered on our mission statement, while earning a \$750 scholarship, please email our Graduate Assistant, Anne Weiss at [haweiss@iupui.edu](mailto:haweiss@iupui.edu).
- Besides all that you can always [join us](#) on Facebook. We look forward to seeing you at the next discussion!