State Board Updates
August 2020

If you are no longer an officer or on the board of your local League, please forward this email and attachments to the new leaders of your League.

Local League To Do’s (email: lwvny@lwvny.org or call 518-465-4162)

- Have a conversation with your County BOE and complete survey attached or online at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc1QDwuRrToP6tEEIY3zAmz1gXdvVoso0AD9wA8skJicbz8Gw/viewform
- Schedule a membership meeting in fall or winter to discuss the materials for the update to the League’s healthcare position (reports will be due March 1, 2021)

President’s Report, Suzanne Stassevitch, smstass@mac.com
League Leaders, the demands on you this year to promote and provide election information and combat misinformation in your communities will be enormous. And I know you will meet the challenge because you always amaze me with your energy, dedication and ingenuity.

So much to do. How can we finally get it done, now, reach the goals of free and fair voting for everyone? August provided so many important dates to remind us that the work for universal suffrage and unhindered access to the polls is not finished; the anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, commemoration of the 19th Amendment, and the August 28 March on Washington (1963) that propelled congress to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Barriers to the vote come in many guises and all of the changes in our election laws, the uncertainties about the postal service and the constant barrage of information about voting in the media are alarming and confusing many voters, which can lead to voters just giving up.

You, your members and volunteers of the League of Women Voters are a TRUSTED source in your community and voters will be looking to you for information about voting safely and making sure their vote is counted. The LWVNY is staying up to date with election reforms from the Legislature and EO’s from the Governor. Jennifer Wilson’s Friday Update, our texting service (Text: VoteNY to 474747) and our website are updated ASAP any changes to our election procedures are changed.

We are trying not to have too many meetings that pull you away from your vital work, but we are having wonderful conversations sharing ideas and GOTV solutions statewide amongst voter services leaders and leaders in rural communities. I urge you to join whenever you can to share ideas, concerns and questions about League activities.

September 14, 2020, 5PM, I will be holding the first monthly President’s Call. The call will be scheduled on the second Monday of the month. The topic for this first call will be: Leveraging Your Networks during Election
2020. All local League, MAL and ILO Presidents, Co-Presidents and Steering Committee Members are welcome. We will explore resources of the state and national League, organizing and growing our volunteers and supporters and exploring issues important to you. I would like to develop areas for conversation with you that are about your priorities and create an opportunity for you to talk to each other.

**Women’s Suffrage History: Barb Thomas, bkoepnicust@gmail.com and Joan Johnson, jaj62@tweny.rr.com**

This month was a huge month for women’s suffrage celebrations! On August 19, 1920, Tennessee was the last of the necessary 36 ratifying states to secure adoption of the 19th amendment and then on August 26, US Secretary of State Colby Bainbridge certified the amendment. Women fought for over 70 years and had finally won the right to vote! The state League celebrated on August 26 with a Centennial Celebration Toast virtually on Zoom with 80 League members (see photos below). Even though we couldn’t celebrate in person, we wanted to all join together to honor this great fight – and reenergized ourselves as we continue to fight for voter access and education for all people in this state!

Many other local Leagues and organizations celebrated this month with virtual programs and events. Even if you missed some, here’s an email with a list of them that you can still watch as many were archived: https://conta.cc/2EfCL3j.

**From Dare Thompson, former LWVNYS President and League Representative on NYS Women’s Suffrage Commission**

Here is a list of some of the virtual talks I have given this past month about suffrage - all based on the League and the Suffrage Centennial. I hope all local Leagues are documenting their Centennial activities. **COVID did not completely shut down the celebration!**

- **State Senate:** Andrea Stewart-Cousins’s office organized a 19 on 19 virtual event featuring all 19 women senators on August 19 at 19:00 (7 pm) with me as one of three moderators guiding comments by all 19 senators about their experiences as women legislators
- **Town of Cortland:** On August 20 I gave a 10 minute talk in a women-centered program that also included brief comments by Lt. Gov. Hochul, State Senator Peter Harckham, County Executive George Lattimer, and a large number of women Council members and other governmental positions
• Queens Library - a one hour talk on August 21.
• Finally, on September 2 I will be the featured speaker in the NYS Comptroller's Office’s noon-hour Women on Work series.

While this has made for a pretty stressful month, I am so grateful for the opportunity I have had since 2016 to represent the state LWV on the NY Women's Suffrage Commission and to learn so much about our history as women and League members. Don't forget that a whole year ago we also produced a book about the LWV-NYS history and another that brought together every available history from NY’s local Leagues. Don't forget that every current event is quickly becoming history. Are you tracking it? A new century has begun! (The books, both state history and local League histories are available for sale from the state office – call to order yours 518-465-4162.)

Finally, we are having a Flash Sale of our 100th anniversary buttons – 2 for the price of 1 ($1 plus tax and shipping)! Email Marissa@lwvny.org if you’d like to purchase some for your local League. You can give us a credit card or we can invoice your local League.

Census requires all of our help! Tales and request for help from Census Worker!
I understand that a lot of us League members signed up to be Census "enumerators,” a fancy name for door-to-door field workers. The work started suddenly (I began August 3) and apparently is being brought to an early end on September 30. This means that the work is more difficult and more important than ever, and I'm sure my fellow enumerators agree that anything YOU do to encourage public participation will be very valuable. Here in New York we need a full count not only to get our fair share of federal dollars but to make sure they don't take away one or two of our Congress members!

Go to 2020census.gov to learn more, and please use your online and paper communications to urge people to return their survey if they haven’t already. ALSO, if they get a call from the census bureau, they should open the door or pick up the phone because it may be someone just trying to clarify an address situation or otherwise make the census more accurate. We don't want to miss even one person!

So many of my visits are to homes with mixed up addresses or new or no-longer-used apartments in their homes and the census effort. Often no one answers the door so I leave a note with 2020 Census contact information. I wish everyone who gets one of these would respond right away because otherwise they'll just send me or someone else out again - such a waste of precious time and money

2020 is a terrible year in which to get an accurate count. Please do whatever you can right now to help. September 30 is moments away.

State Office: Laura Ladd Bierman, Laura@lwvny.org
Lawn Signs For Sale
The state League created a lawn sign that is available for sale. They are generic and say VOTE in English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Korean, Bengali and Arabic. They also have the League logo and the website address for Vote 411 (see photo on right). They are 18 inches X 24 inches and include a wire stake. We are selling them for $12 each plus shipping with a required minimum order of 10; if you purchase through your grants management account, they are $10 each plus shipping.
Healthcare Position Update

At the state Convention in June 2019, the delegates voted to update the current state League position on healthcare financing. A committee was formed and has been working hard to gather information and materials for a consideration of this update. In early September, all materials will be distributed to the local Leagues to use with members to discuss this updated position. **EACH LOCAL LEAGUE SHOULD SCHEDULE A MEMBERSHIP MEETING SOMETIME BETWEEN OCTOBER 2020 AND MARCH 1, 2021, TO DISCUSS THE UPDATE.** The materials will include potential speakers for presentation of the materials at a meeting. The local League’s decision on the proposed new position will be due on March 1, 2021 to the state League office.

Voter Services: Judie Gorenstein, judieL728@aol.com

LWVNY has continued to work with local leagues, ILOs and MALS to reach our goal of registering, educating and then GOTV this fall. Although our leagues have mastered voter registration, doing it at time when we are social distancing poses new challenges. As voter registration is the first step in the process and as this year will be one when a majority of voters may be voting absentee with ballots being mailed to them as early as September 18, we made this our priority in August.

LWVNY hosted a virtual meeting on Zoom for people interested in working on voter registration while social distancing. Usually, we would all be at fairs, farmers’ markets, malls and more right now registering voters. With the COVID pandemic, voter registration numbers are greatly decreased from years past. We asked all of you to help brainstorm and share what you are doing to register voters. And, again, great ideas were shared. See the minutes attached to this email for all the ideas that were shared on this Zoom meeting!

As promised, we compiled a **Toolkit for Voter Registration While Social Distancing** but we are still formatting it so we’ll send it to all next week. It will have sample flyers, trainings, videos and more – lots of great information to help all local Leagues still register voters while staying safe. Contact information is provided for the different leagues. We hope that this will not only be a helpful toolkit now but will expand as leagues share any new voter registration ideas, workshops, and activities.

The state League also created a **Toolkit on Organizing Virtual Candidate Events** (attached). We used the information provided from the local Leagues who organized virtual events this spring for the June primary. A contact person is listed for each of the methods or platforms used by the local Leagues in case you’d like to contact someone for more information. The Toolkit also includes sample rules, letters, scripts, etc, which you are free to copy and use for your own event. These toolkits are attached to help you.

We have also attached a **survey we would like you to complete after speaking or hopefully meeting with your County Board of Elections.** If you prefer to complete it online, here’s a link:  
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScQDwuRrT6t31gXdvVos0AD9wA8skJicbz8Gw/viewform. This year it is more important than ever that we work together with the Board of Elections to enable the election to run as smoothly as possible.

Here’s a video created by LWV of Huntington that has **youth urging other youth to vote.** Share and post widely. https://youtu.be/1xR2xQPaVmU

Here’s a YouTube video created by LWV of Albany County which instructs people **how to register and vote** (3 ways) for this fall’s election. Feel free to share it – and you can add your own local League info in the caption and comments so you don’t have to edit the YouTube: https://youtu.be/S21p0gcaI_
Together we can all meet the challenges we face this year:

1. Know the important deadlines
   - General Election  November 3, 2020
   - Early Voting  October 24 - November 1
   - Deadline for Voter Registration  October 9 in person and postmarked
   - Application for Absentee Ballot  October 27 postmarked; November 2 in person

2. Plan to do your activities, events with early voting and absentee voting in mind
3. And remember that we must not only be but be perceived as nonpartisan!

LWVNYS is pleased that LWVUS is giving us tools to help us achieve our mission
- LWVUS has created some PSAs to GOTV that all can use. See them here: https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/national-association-broadcasters-and-league-women-voters-launch-voter
- LWVUS has also created other tools for the 2020 Election: https://www.lwv.org/league-management/elections-tools/2020-election-preparation-toolkit

Advocacy: Sally Robinson, sally.s.robinson@gmail.com and Jennifer Wilson, jennifer@lwvny.org

Governor Signs Voting Legislation
In August the Governor signed into law legislation to expand absentee voting in New York State in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. New legislation includes:
- allowing any voter to use "temporary illness" to request their absentee ballot (applies from 2020 - 2022),
- allowing Boards of Elections to accept absentee ballot requests more than 30 days before an election,
- allowing Boards of Elections to accept ballots received within the deadline even if they do not have a legible postmark, and
- allowing voters to address issues with their absentee ballots so that their vote can be counted.

The League advocated for the passage of these reforms and is working on creating educational materials for the public so that all voters know about their options to vote in the general election.

Legislative Hearing on Voting During a Pandemic
The League also testified at a Joint Legislative Hearing on Voting during a Pandemic. The League reported on the results of our absentee voting survey, the need for additional funding for county boards of election, and a call for an additional focus on voter registration. You can read our testimony and absentee voting report here.
And you can watch the archived hearing footage here.

Poll Worker Recruitment
This month the US League has also launched a campaign to address the imminent poll worker shortage for the 2020 election. The National League has partnered with Power the Polls to work to encourage more people to sign up to become poll workers for November. The League is urging people to take the following 5 actions:
1. Sign up as a poll worker  Pledge to be part of the solution on Election Day by serving in your community.
2. If you can't work the polls due to health risks or other obligations, ask the people in your life if they can, Share information about how they can get involved, wherever they live.
3. Talk about the importance of poll workers. Take to your social media networks, professional listservs, and neighbor groups to talk about the expected poll worker shortage.
4. Use this opportunity to shine a light on the connection between our voting processes and social and racial equity in this country. Underrepresented communities are at the highest risk of missing out on the
chance to vote. They're disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. They're most likely to vote, by choice and/or necessity, in-person - and thus most impacted if our voting sites are unprepared for a crush of voters. It's on all of us to stand up and help ensure every single voter has the chance to participate this year.

5. If you're a League volunteer or advocate working to support your local elections officials, share this great list of ideas and resources, "50 Ideas for Recruiting and Retaining Election Workers," from the Center for Tech and Civic Life, and lend your expertise and problem-solving skills to help them get the job done!

Click here to learn more about this new campaign and partnership.

The State League is also working with the State Board of Elections to participate in National Poll Worker Recruitment Day on September 1st to help encourage more New Yorkers to sign up to be a poll worker. The League is encouraging all local Leagues and League members to participate in the day and share information on the importance of being a poll worker and how voters can sign up to become a poll worker in 2020.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI): Regina Tillman, rmt370@gmail.com and Crystal Joseph, campus@lwvnyc.org

I am pleased to announce that our State-wide Diversity-Equity-Inclusion Task Force is up and running! We held two introductory meetings in the month of August 2020. All members are now started on the task of applying a LWVUS developed DEI Assessment Survey to their respective Boards.

Members of the team are listed below… with asterisks** indicating who among them are the LWVUS DEI Pilot Training and Grant recipients (a total of 10 in NYS, out of 46 nation-wide grant recipients!) A big congratulations to them because they have been working on their DEI knowledge and skills since their applications were accepted, back on May 12, 2020! We also appreciate the task force members who are taking advantage of the opportunity to take the Leaderosity Course in Social Equity to become as well versed in DEI terminology and issues as the grantees. This is a really great team that was assembled, and I look forward to outcomes that will make us all proud!

If you want to help your Task Force Representative, you can still access the DEI course requiring 30-40 hours of a time commitment and being well worth every minute! Your representative may need to gather interested people in their local league community to help develop and implement the action plans that will come out of both the training and the DEI Assessment. You can be ready to help them, and to help heal this country. The good news? The course has been extended yet again! Without charge, any league member may take the Social Equity Course entitled, “The Equity Journey” for completion by February 2021! The link to register: https://www.courses.leaderosity.org/courses/the-equity-journey

Introducing your LWVNYS DEI Task Force Members for 2020-2021!

LWV NYS …. Regina Tillman, Task Force Chairperson**
LWV Albany …. Gail Volk**
LWV Buffalo/Niagara …. Elizabeth Zausmer**
LWV Chautauqua …. Rianna Moore & Mary Margaret Fogarty
LWV Hamptons, Shelter Island, North Fork …. Terese (Terry) Wildrick
LWV Huntington …. Dianne Slavin**
LWV Manhasset/Port Washington …. Regina Goutevenier**
LWV NYC …. Crystal Joseph**
LWV Rensselaer …. Shirley Buel**
LWV Rivertowns … Susan Weisfeld
LWV Rochester …. Barbara Grosh**
LWV Saratoga …. Linda McKenny & Mary Estelle Ryckman**
LWV Schenectady … Victoria Cooper
Youth Programs: Crystal Joseph, campus@lwvnyc.org

Anchorage Youth Campaign
LWV Anchorage student fellows are challenging other state leagues and asking one critical question: How well do your current youth campaigns match up to the changing civics landscape? In their quest to build the conversation on civic engagement, student participants anticipate the core competencies that young people need when going to polls but keep one simple concept of civility in mind, “No one has ever asked me what I am interested in.” The students who work to ‘build the vote’ incorporate student-focused needs like creating mock debates and model UN’s around their own schedules and anticipate the technological needs (like virtual organizing) that would support peer-to-peer leadership and learning. While some other youth-led groups focus only on cohorts of either high school or college participants, LWV Anchorage has found a way to merge both in a way that builds on their local mission but also maintains national significance. Older college members serve as coaches to their high school colleagues and support civic readiness by covering a range of elements that demonstrate political social awareness including: why voting matters, following relevant political issues and letting go of their own assumptions as they champion more inclusive communities and reflect positive attitudes that advocate for all human rights. Additional tools and resources are available here.

From LWVUS
Resources and more from LWVUS:
Training Resources
- Volunteer Engagement and Management Training Part 1 & Part 2 Recording
- Volunteer Engagement and Management Training PowerPoint Slides (See attachment)
- Working with College Students Tip Sheet (See Attachment)
- Volunteer Management Quick Tip Sheet
- How to Collect Data Safety- Understanding and Partnering with Your Community
- DEI Lens Resource
- LWV Flicker Account (Find LWV Photos Here)

Upcoming Trainings & Community Calls
- September 1st at 3 pm EST-National Poll Worker Recruitment Community Call, click here to register.
- September 3rd at 3 pm EST-Voter Registration in Unprecedented Times Training, click here to register.
- September 8th Monthly Community Call click here to register.
- Thursday, September 17th at 3pm EST: Growing Our Democracy: From New Citizens to New Voters. Click here to register!

Visit the Organizing Resource page for more information about the upcoming trainings. If you missed it, check out the Volunteer Engagement and Management Training Part 1 & Part 2 Recordings.

OutreachCircle
- OutreachCircle: Taking League Power to New Heights Page on LMS
- OutreachCircle Client Video (Why OutreachCircle Can Work for Your League)
- OutreachCircle Supporter Video (Why LWV Members and Volunteers Would Want to Use OutreachCircle)
- If you would like to know more email the Organizing Team at organizing@lwv.org

Advocacy and Litigation Webinars
Wed., September 23, 2020 - Developing Effective Advocacy Alerts
Rapid response is the name of the game. In today's unpredictable yet connected world, it's important to know how to rise in the moment and respond to last minute changes and challenges. Join us as we walk you through building effective advocacy alerts. Register here

Visit the League Management Page to view past recordings and register for upcoming Advocacy and Litigation Briefings.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Webinars
September 24: Register Here
This webinar will explore microaggressions, how they form, how to recognize them, and how to prevent them. Visit the League Management Site to view past recordings and register for upcoming webinars.

DEI Training Modules
If your League is looking for resources to connect on DEI remotely consider reviewing the 5 DEI Modules produced last year for the Making Democracy grant program. Each of these modules includes a short-recorded webinar with discussion prompts and additional reading and viewing materials. The modules can be viewed on the League Management Site