

League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT



2021-2022 LWNYS EDUCATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Throughout this past year, we all worked together to empower voters and protect our democracy. We were thrilled to receive a \$1 million gift during the year to help us accomplish these goals. The anonymous donor requested that the gift be used to strengthen state capabilities but also to assist local Leagues in educating voters and increasing voter participation in our elections. The gift, the largest ever received by the state League, is meant to inspire others to support our efforts to restore faith in our elections and government.

This past year was also one of challenges and uncertainty but working together with our local Leagues, MALS and ILOs, and LWVUS has enabled us to not only have many successes but also resilience and determination to move forward. In times of uncertainty, voters look towards the League. And, the League was there to provide facts, educate and engage people especially in underserved communities, while ensuring adherence to our policies of nonpartisanship and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). What was certain was that our League boards and volunteers would provide their time and effort to accomplish our mission. What was also certain was that we could count on our donors to financially support us.

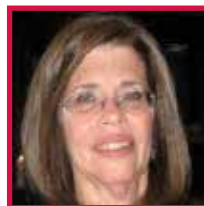
Throughout the summer and the fall of 2021, we educated voters about the election changes as they happened, whether it was where to vote, how to vote or deadlines. We educated voters about the five referendums on the ballot, some of which we did take positions. Leagues worked diligently to not only register voters but to get out the vote. We were disappointed when the election reform referendums failed (same day voter registration and no-excuse absentee voting), but we do not give up and will continue to educate and lobby for election reforms.

The League has always believed that voters should choose their legislators, rather than legislators choosing their voters. During the year, redistricting and the campaign, People Powered Fair Maps, were a major focus for the state League, our local Leagues, and also LWVUS. Much time and work was devoted to educating voters and advocating for fair

maps by all levels of the League. The state League offered many webinars on the redistricting process, communities of interest, mapping, and how to write testimony. Materials were distributed to educate members and the public so that all could provide input and/or testify at hearings, which so many did. We continued through the entire process, keeping the public informed as to the many decisions and disputes so that they could influence the process. The League provided critical information and training for members and the public to participate in this once-every-ten-year process.

Working with youth was especially challenging this year. Initially many schools were still virtual, but even when they began in-person teaching, most remained closed to visitors or outside programs. We were hopeful and planned to hold the annual Students Inside Albany Conference but were always aware that it might need to be cancelled due to COVID and therefore took steps to keep everyone informed. When we did have to cancel the conference, parents, students and local Leagues were all appreciative of our efforts and expressed hope that following year SIA could be held. This was indeed a year of uncertainty but also one of commitment to our mission, while also keeping people safe and informed.

Throughout this year the state League remained committed to grow in power and in influence. Our Leagues members and our donors remained committed to helping us succeed. Increased donations allowed us to increase our staff which, in turn, increased what we are able to do throughout New York State. Yes, it took us all working together. Thanks to the staff, thanks to the state board, thanks to local Leagues, MALS, and ILOs, and thanks to our donors, we accomplished a lot. We cannot however, stand still. We must continue to work together to move forward and grow. I am certain that we will!




Judie Gorenstein

ABOUT THE LWVNY EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Throughout its history the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation (Foundation) has produced and distributed nonpartisan, educational materials; funded activities which promote citizen responsibility in the democratic process; and facilitated communication between citizens and their government officials. It has a strong commitment to young people and to the promise of the continued success of democracy.

The Foundation was established in 1950 as the Foundation for Citizen Education (FCE) to support the educational activities of the League of Women Voters of New York State. It is incorporated under the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law of New York and is classified as a public educational charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Foundation is dedicated exclusively to the support and promotion of the educational programs of the League of Women Voters in New York State.

MISSION

The Foundation is the educational and fund-raising arm of The League of Women Voters of New York State which derives its strength from the energy and commitment of the women and men in about 45 local Leagues throughout the state. It is strictly nonpartisan, and works primarily on projects that enlighten the electorate i.e., empower through education.

The charitable support of individual people, corporations and foundations throughout New York State help us accomplish three central missions:

- Educate people on the importance of their participation in government, in the political process and, most importantly, in the life of their home community.
- Create awareness of the issues at the local, state and national levels and what average citizens can do to have an impact on their government.
- Instill in young people and new citizens the knowledge of their role and responsibilities in managing their own government.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

One of the most common questions we get as the State Youth Committee is, “How do we engage youth?” We have always had several examples of great programming local Leagues are doing, but they were never in one place that was easily accessible for all local Leagues to use as inspiration or replicate for themselves. After contacting local Leagues and having discussions at the 2022 Regional Trainings, we created a youth-focused toolkit to make those great programs easily accessible to local Leagues. Thus, the Youth Programming Toolkit was born.

Below are some of the youth programs organized by local Leagues included in the Youth Toolkit:

Citizenship and Political Activism

LWV of the North Country

The LWV of the North Country collaborated with Champlain Valley Educational Services to offer an all-day symposium for area high school students: Citizenship and Political Activism in NYS. The symposium gathered local and state elected officials (city mayor, town supervisor, county legislator, NYS Senator, NYS Assemblymember, and a school board member) to discuss the structures of our various types of governments and to encourage active participation in governmental decision-making. The LWV discussed the importance of voting and voter registration. The Board of Elections commissioners discussed how and why to become involved in the electoral

process and that every vote counts. During lunch, all the speakers continued their conversations by rotating among small groups of the student-delegates. The student delegates were able to ask questions at the end of each session.

First Vote

LWV of Cattaraugus and Allegany MAL Unit

We reached out to 29 local high schools in late spring of 2018 and concentrated our efforts on schools interested in collaborating with us. More than 25 committed community volunteers have attended annual trainings and visited schools to do voter registration. Our success in the beginning did and still depends upon the unique relationship between one co-chair and school personnel as well as the large

volunteer network by the other co-chair. As of 2022, we are now a known entity and our calls are expected. With Covid restrictions on campus visits, we stayed connected with follow up communications each semester since Spring 2020 with voter tips, updates, and other resources. We have a similar program with all five of our local colleges and universities.

House of Kicks

LWV of Albany County

House of Kicks is an annual sneaker sale held in the Albany area. The LWV of Albany trained youth to do voter registration at the event. With youth leading the charge and the League providing the resources, the youth were registering and interacting with other youth and more likely to discuss voter registration.

Participation in Government

LWV of Rochester

This 40- minute program includes 1) 20 minutes of interactive discussion about voting and not voting, 2) a game to bring home the consequences of giving up one's vote, 3) plus 20 minutes for guidance in voter registration. The program has evolved to include a more diverse presenter team, including men and persons of color. Our two person teams include a team leader who is an LWV-RMA member and a community member.

Running and Winning

LWV of Huntington

This full day event for high school junior and senior girls, invites 6 elected women officials or past officials to speak to the girls on why they ran for office, the obstacles they faced, and the successes they have had. Past participants include county legislators, town councilwomen, town clerks and judges. After hearing from the officials there is a breakout session with one official, two league members and a small group of girls 6-8 at each table. The girls ask the officials more questions, and then work on a mock candidate. Each table then presents their candidate to the entire group. The students create a job description, resume, platform, a logo, a hashtag, Instagram account, press release, and short speech for their candidate.



Beth Radow, NYS Assemblyman Steve Otis, Mamaroneck High School Student Inside Albany, Justin Solis, NYS Senator Shelley Mayer, Westchester County Legislator Catherine Parker and Mamaroneck High School AP Government teacher Joe Liberti. Luncheon arranged for student Justin Solis after cancellation of 2022 Students Inside Albany Conference with same purpose of Justin getting acquainted with his state elected officials and learning about state government. Justin stated, “I just wanted to say thank you so much for the lunch! It was an unforgettable experience.”

Special Election

LWV of Cattaraugus and Allegany MAL Unit

At specific voter registration events, we hold a special election to draw people to our table, mostly children, but parents come along! For instance, at the local YMCA, we had a "Best Green Vegetable" election, with paper ballots, including an opportunity for a write in candidate. The ballots were cast and a "Kids vote too" sticker was given out. Each venue was sent a poster with the results.

Student Day at the Suffolk County Legislature

LWV of Suffolk County

Suffolk County LWV and the Suffolk County Legislature jointly sponsor the program. They invite several high schools to participate by selecting six to eight students from their school who are interested in a full day "behind the scenes" educational experience into the inner workings of our local government. The day consists of a welcome from the Presiding Officer, hearing from several legislators, breakup sessions of small groups to learn "How a Bill Becomes a Law," "How Ideas Become Resolutions," etc. This is followed by a Mock Legislative Session.

Teach Me to Vote

LWV of Saratoga

This program is a video targeted to fifth grade students and designed specifically for the last election. It is just six minutes long but talks about the importance of voting and the ballot proposals. The link to the video is: <https://www.lwvsaratoga.org/teachmetovote2021>.

Vote 18

LWV of Huntington

Vote 18 is an interactive voting lesson run by a LWV facilitator. They lead the students through the two hundred years plus journey of the history of voting from our country's inception to the present. Next the students conduct a debate and hold a mock election to promote a discussion of current events and timely issues. The students are then taught how to fill out a voter registration form and the eligible students are registered. The program requires three to four league members to participate.

Youth Corps

LWV of Westchester ILO

The League of Women Voters of Westchester Youth Corps encourages youth, as our leaders of tomorrow, to become active and informed participants in government and to ensure that young adult voices are heard. We encourage all students, ages 16-23, to be part of the Corps. In 2020, LWVW piloted a Youth Corps comprised of 20 high school and college students, and is currently in the process of expanding the Corps as students transition out of the program. Students were actively involved in voter registration drives; assisted at poll locations by guiding the elderly and disabled to designated voter lines and distributing water and snacks to those waiting in long lines; developed GOTV videos for distribution; and launched the Youth Corps' Instagram GOTV messaging.

I was extremely honored to be selected to attend the Students Inside Albany Conference and was saddened when it was unfortunately canceled. I was looking forward to experiencing our representative government first hand. However, I learned that as one door closes, another one opens. A few weeks after the scheduled date of the conference, I was offered the enriching opportunity to shadow New York State Senator Shelley Mayer by attending a few events she was invited to with her. Spending the morning with Senator Mayer was enlightening and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to get to know her and her work. The first event we attended was a presentation by Westchester Women's Agenda, entitled "Juneteenth: Where Do We Go From Here?" Before the presentation started, I accompanied Senator Mayer as she caught up with all of the inspiring leaders and volunteers in attendance. I was truly left in awe of all of the passionate and dedicated people there after being in their presence and briefly talking to many of them. The presentation itself was immensely informative and I am very fortunate to have been there to listen and learn about such an important topic. I learned how busy and involved the life of an elected official is, as we had to unfortunately leave Westchester Women's Agenda's presentation in order to make Senator Mayer's next event in time. Senator Mayer was invited to speak at the BRIDGE school's graduation ceremony, located in Cerebral Palsy of Westchester. I accompanied Senator Mayer as she met and took pictures with the graduates and their families. It was a touching ceremony and exciting to celebrate the graduates' accomplishments. I appreciate Senator Mayer's efforts to talk to and understand all of her constituents and their lives. Again, Senator Mayer had to promptly head off to her next significant event, so she warmly bid farewell, and I stayed to watch the end of the ceremony. I gained more than I could've anticipated from this experience. It was eye opening to learn about the work of Senator Mayer and the amount of commitment, drive, and enthusiasm it takes to work in government. Shadowing Senator Mayer has made me hopeful and more eager to pursue a career like hers that works to better the lives in a community.

— Gwen Dominquez



2022 Students Inside Albany Conference was cancelled because of the pandemic affecting staff and chaperones. We are truly saddened that this happened and are starting plans for the 2023 SIA Conference.

EDUCATION

Regional Training Workshops

During March and April, the state League organized regional training workshops in four locations across the state: Rochester, Ithaca, Albany and Scarsdale. Almost 200 people attended these workshops to network with League leaders and members and to learn new skills to strengthen their local Leagues.

The workshops covered the following topics:

It's All About the Ask: Tactics for Increasing Membership and Cultivating Leadership

Empower Voters and Defend Democracy. That's our mission. To further this mission we need strong, sustainable leagues. And that requires all of us to get involved in attracting prospects, welcoming and mentoring new members, checking in with inactive ones, and identifying leadership candidates.

Our best tool is The Ask:

- Ask others to attend a league program,
- Ask others to join,
- Ask members how they want to get involved, and
- Ask engaged Leaguers to take leadership positions

The 411 on Vote 411: A Beginners Guide to the New Platform (Hands-on Workshop)

Explore the new Vote411 platform (League's electronic voter guide). This workshop will walk through a step-by-step guide to setting up your local elections and will answer your questions on the new system. Bring a laptop so you can navigate the platform along with us (laptop not required).

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Past, Present and Future

We will look at some of the "isms" that hang over our collective past, both as a country and a national organization. Thereafter,

attendees will be guided in a conversation on the efforts made in recent months, both on an individual basis and by their local leagues, in overcoming the marginalization that has placed the soul of democracy at increasing risk.

Zooming into 2022: How to Successfully Host a Virtual or Hybrid Candidate Forum

Discover various methods for hosting candidate forums in the digital age. This workshop will discuss best practices for hosting a virtual, hybrid or in-person forum.

Engaging Youth Through Civic Collaborations

While the pandemic has limited our traditional abilities to get into schools, that doesn't mean we have to stop engaging the youth! Learn how to engage the next generation of voters online, in person, and everything in between even if you can't get into the classroom.

Hacking Social Media: Getting the best use out of your League's Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts

Learn about different social media platforms, their quirks, and how to "hack" the algorithm. This workshop will explore the uniqueness of each social media platform and explain how your League can use them to your advantage.

Let's Take Action: How, When and Why?

You or your local League is passionate about an issue and wants to advocate and lobby. When is the correct time? How best to advocate? And, how does taking action vary based on local, state or national issues? Come learn more about advocacy.



Local League Voter Services Activities

Local Leagues are asked to complete a survey each year after the election about the many voter education efforts they undertook during the election season. In 2021, 29 local Leagues boasted and celebrated their hard efforts.

- 956 League members volunteered to assist in voter registration drives and candidate forums.
- 49 joined the League as new members.
- 20 Leagues participated in Vote411.
- Leagues held 404 registration events (ie schools, farmers markets, naturalization ceremonies, underserved communities) and registered 1,083 new voters.
- 61 candidate forums were held, 43 of which were virtual and 18 in person. Those forums had 8,240 views after the live event, whether held in person or virtually.
- Over 12,520 pieces of voting information were distributed or handed out.

Some of the comments from local League responses included:

National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) allowed many local Leagues to ramp up registration events and partner with local organizations and businesses. Several Leagues trained volunteers in other organizations to register voters, including high school students and college students. Partnering with local libraries and school districts allowed for dissemination of voting information in all communities, but especially in targeted minority and underserved areas. Several Leagues accessed voter turnout information from the 2020 election, allowing them to target areas to improve voter turnout.

For many Leagues, a relationship with the local Board of Elections facilitated their GOTV efforts and their accessing of candidate information.

Lawn signs were used by many Leagues. There was a widespread use of Eblasts. All Leagues made some use of social media to educate and inform voters on deadlines for registering to vote, submitting applications for absentee ballots, early voting dates, times and sites, etc. Being able to provide links to Voters Guides, Palm Cards, Voter

Registration forms and instructions on filling out the forms helped in outreach efforts.

Many Leagues reached out to communities with minorities and with disabilities by partnering with other community organizations like Self Advocate of NYS GOTV Task Force, state facilities and organizations that deal with people who have mental health and physical disabilities. These organizations, being present at League events, greatly assisted in providing handouts at food pantries, and school snack programs.



State League Brochures

During the 2021 election season, the state League distributed 13,000 Voter Guides Part I in English and over 2,000 in Spanish. These Guides provided critical information on voter registration, absentee ballot process and voting procedures. In the fall, the state League produced and translated a Voter

Guide Part II which included descriptions and pros and cons of the five ballot proposals on the ballot in November 2021. Over 30,000 of these brochures in English were distributed, as well as over 10,000 in Spanish, 1,000 in each Chinese and Korean, and electronically in Burmese, Arabic and Karen.

During 2021-22, the state League also updated and reprinted the series of brochures entitled, Your Right to Vote in New York State, for special populations of college students, individuals with physical disabilities, homeless individuals and individuals with criminal convictions or detained in jail or prison.

EDUCATION

People Powered Fair Maps Campaign Update



In 2021, the League of Women Voters of New York State took on the monumental challenge of engaging New Yorkers in the first ever Commission led redistricting cycle. This brand-new process was meant to allow for greater public input through constitutionally mandated public hearings to be held throughout the state. Unfortunately, redistricting in 2021 did not come without challenges.

We worked to educate the public and prepare New Yorkers to participate in the redistricting process by providing trainings on how to draw and analyze maps and present testimony. We worked with our partners to further spread our educational materials and created a clearing house of redistricting resources nyredistricting.org. The League engaged our grassroots volunteers in our work by identifying Redistricting Delegates in local Leagues to oversee our redistricting efforts throughout New York State.

The League was able to encourage New Yorkers to testify at the eight summer "listening sessions" and 14 fall public hearings in 2021. Our impact was felt throughout the process with several Redistricting Commissioners commending the work of the League during their public hearings. Although the Leagues' work was robust, some high-level accomplishments during the initial phase from January through December 2021 included:

- Hosting nine virtual events that engaged more than 3,139 New Yorkers;
- Distributing 24 online educational resources, creating six education videos, and sharing six free mapping software tools through our website NYRedistricting.org;
- Using social media to engage 47,000 Facebook users and 166,000 Twitter users;
- Identifying 79 League volunteers to serve as Redistricting Delegates throughout New York State;

- Identifying 357 local stakeholder organizations in underserved areas in New York to target our outreach work;
- Writing, designing, translating, printing and distributing almost 50,000 Voter Guides in seven languages;
- Successfully advocating for \$4 million in funding for the Redistricting Commission;
- And engaging more than 30 diverse statewide and national organizational partners.

From January to June 2022, the state League entered a new phase of the project in educating the public on the draft maps and how to influence or provide comments on the proposals. Work we did included::

- Releasing 7 press releases, statements and letters to the Independent Redistricting Commission and Legislative leaders;
- Creating 15 Facebook posts that received a total of 378 likes, and were shared 102 times;
- Creating 9 Instagram posts that received a total of 191 likes, and were shared 53 times;
- Creating 21 tweets on Twitter, that received a total of 232 likes, and were retweeted 157 times;

- Holding 8 meetings with the 43 local League redistricting delegates and multiple individual meetings that providing guidance on local redistricting;
- Holding one training event on local redistricting via Zoom. It was attended by 184 people and shared and viewed by 100 after the event;
- Creating interactive Google maps on the new districts which were viewed by the public 72,118 times;
- Creating a local redistricting Toolkit that was posted on the state League website and distributed statewide to all 45 local Leagues and to over 300 organizations elsewhere in the state.

January - December 2021 State League Education

Public education was the cornerstone of our redistricting work in 2021. The League worked to not only educate the public, but also to encourage them to be a part of the redistricting. The League created a website to house all of our redistricting resources in one place. Over the course of the campaign, the League collected 24 online educational resources, created six education videos, and shared six free mapping software tools on NYRedistricting.org.

We started our campaign for fair maps in January 2021 by holding a virtual event for members to learn about the redistricting process in New York State and how the League would be working to educate the public and encourage public participation. In total 166 members attended and 119 additional members watched the archived video after the event.

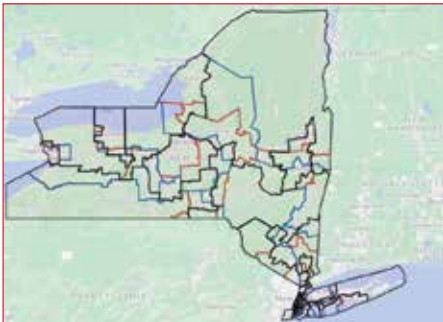


We then hosted an event inviting members of the public to listen to a discussion on what challenges may come from engaging communities in redistricting. The event featured a panel of three redistricting experts to address these questions. The event had 276 participants watch via Zoom, 184 additional participants who viewed the panel via Facebook livestream, and 260 individuals who viewed the event later via YouTube for a total of 720 viewers.

Building on our member education, the League held a train the trainer event to teach members about communities of interest and how to engage those communities in redistricting. This event had 116 members attend with 100 additional views of the archived video.

A representative from Representable trained the public to use this free mapping tool. This event was open to League members and members of partner organizations, 70 League members and partners participated in the training.

By far the League's most impressive event during the first half of our campaign was the People's Hearing on Redistricting. The League invited the public and diverse stakeholder organizations to attend a virtual "hearing." In total, 22 organizations representing immigration, disability, and social justice organizations offered "testimony" at our event. In total 325 participants watched the event via Zoom, 750 individuals livestreamed the event via Facebook, and 174 individuals watched the archived event on YouTube. A total of 1,249 participants viewed our People's Hearing.



In late spring, the New York Redistricting Commission announced it would be holding virtual "listening sessions" to allow the public to testify about their communities of interest before the Commission released draft maps. The League worked to provide two public trainings on how to write and present compelling testimony. The trainings had 150 virtual participants and 172 viewers watching the archived recordings for a total of 322 people engaged.

After the Commission released their draft maps in September, the League worked to hold additional public trainings, this time focusing on showing New Yorkers how to analyze the proposed maps. The trainings had 162 participants and the recording was viewed by 115 additional viewers for a total of 277 people engaged.

Although the League typically engages with New Yorkers in person at public forums, because of the ongoing pandemic, the League held all of its trainings and events virtually. From January to November, the League had 47,000 Facebook engagements and 166,000 Twitter impressions on our redistricting posts.

At the start of the campaign the League created a single website to list and share educational resources related to our fair maps campaign. NYRedistricting.org became a one-stop-shop for New Yorkers seeking information about the redistricting process and how they could get involved. Over the course of the campaign, the League collected 24 online educational resources, created 6 education videos, and shared 6 free mapping software tools on NYRedistricting.org.

The League created a 2021 Voter Guide Part II, Ballot Proposals brochure that provided educational information, including pros and cons, on the proposals on the fall ballot. One of those proposals related to amending the redistricting process in the NYS Constitution. This educational brochure was translated into six languages: Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Karen and Burmese. The translated versions were posted on the state League website and almost 50,000 paper versions were printed and distributed by local Leagues statewide.

Local League Efforts

At the start of the campaign, the state League staff met with all 46 local League chapters to identify local League Redistricting Delegates. The Leagues were able to identify 79 volunteers to serve as delegates. The state League also created a list of 357 local stakeholder organizations from all regions of New York. This list was provided to delegates who were encouraged to contact these organizations to get them involved in redistricting.

Local Leagues from around the state participated in both the Commission's summer "listening sessions" and the fall public hearings. In the summer, 20 Leagues testified virtually or submit written testimony to the Commission for their "listening sessions". During the second round of IRC hearings, members of the League

showed up all throughout the state. Overall, 18 Leagues submitted testimony online and 8 Leagues testified in person at an IRC hearing.

Our Leagues were so prominent with their consistent presence and message of nonpartisanship that the Commissioners took notice. At the White Plains hearing, Commissioner Jack Martins complimented the league.

"I want to thank the League for taking such a strong position on [releasing a single set of maps]," he said. "Everywhere we have held and heard testimony we have gotten that admonishment from the league, and I thank you for that."

Organizational Engagement

The League engaged more than 30 statewide and national organizational partners in our advocacy work. These partners included LatinoJustice PRLDEF, HispanicFederation, Chinese American Planning Council, New York Immigration Coalition, and the Center for Law and Social Justice. We used those partners to organize 5 joint organizational actions including joint letters to legislative leaders and testimony to the legislative budget committees. The League also arranged 37 remote advocacy meetings with key legislators and high-level budget staff. In total our social media work received 10,000 engagements which included individuals using our advocacy materials to take action by contacting their representatives.

The League was able to focus its efforts on monitoring the work of the Redistricting Commission and ensuring transparency and equitable access throughout the process. The League worked with language access and disability rights advocates to call on the Commission to make their meetings accessible to individuals whose primary language was not English, and those with visual or auditory impairments. The League further urged the Commission to ensure all their mapping negotiations were public so that New Yorkers would have the opportunity to hear how their districts were drawn. From May until November, the League sent the Commission four joint letters regarding the need for transparency and accessibility.

EDUCATION

People Powered Fair Maps Campaign Update (cont.)

January to June 2022 State Redistricting

During the first six months of 2022, state redistricting efforts were chaotic and constantly changing. The League monitored these activities, drafted and released press releases and social media posts, and kept the 45 local Leagues statewide informed as to the recent changes. The League was critical to providing timely updates to the local Leagues, members, and the public during this time of confusion. The activities exhibited the state League's leadership to inform and educate the public about the redistricting process, its impact on communities and the decisions being made by the legislature, courts, and others.

Interactive Google Maps

The maps released by the IRC, the State Legislature, and the New York Court of Appeals' special master continued to be impractical for viewers to analyze their potential new districts.

The League created interactive Google Maps as soon as a new Congressional, State Senate, or Assembly map was released by the IRC, the State Legislature, or the Court's Special Master. As of June 30th, the maps have been viewed a collective 72,118 times.

Local Redistricting

In mid-January the League planned and facilitated an educational webinar on County Redistricting in New York State. The webinar had 184 attendees with a recording posted on the state League website for viewing

after the event. Along with the webinar, the League compiled educational materials in a county redistricting toolkit that was distributed to Local League members and 300 stakeholders that were located in non-League areas. Included in the toolkit was a guide created by the League that explained New York's county redistricting process.

The state League continued to meet with over 40 redistricting delegates from 34 New York Leagues in order to offer support and brainstorm ideas for community engagement within their respective areas. Local Leagues have been heavily involved in their local redistricting processes. The redistricting process has moved into the local arena now, but the state League continues to provide support and assistance to the redistricting delegates who are actively involved in redistricting at the county and local levels.

Supported by Newmark Philanthropies, Inc., and NYS Census Equity Fund

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

One Million Dollar Gift for LWVNYSEF

On Giving Tuesday 2021, the League of Women Voters of NYS Education Foundation (LWVNYSEF) announced it has received an anonymous \$1 million donation to expand and strengthen its fight to defend democracy and voting rights for all. This gift will allow the League to bolster efforts to address voter suppression at the state and local level. With this gift, the League will expand efforts to educate voters and work to ensure voting ease and access for all New Yorkers.

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director of LWVNYS, announced, "This gift is a new beginning for the State League, providing it with new resources to address voter access and engagement among many elements of its mission."

This is the largest gift LWVNYSEF has ever received, and although the donor wishes to remain anonymous, they have a deep commitment to the League's work. One of the donor's motivations in making this gift is to draw attention to the crucial importance of the League of Women Voters as a non-partisan organization that seeks to educate, inform and encourage citizens to take an active part in

their governance at every level. The donor reminisced about her early experiences with parents who believed in taking an active role as citizens. "I remember walking with my mother door to door in neighborhoods to hand out political material and to talk with people about upcoming elections. I am grateful to my parents for nurturing a spirit of civil debate and discourse," stated the donor.

"This donation gives the League the foundation it needs to expand our current educational efforts and reach new, underserved communities throughout New York State," said Laura Ladd Bierman.

Judie Gorenstein, President of the State League said, "With the beginning of our 2nd century of work, the state League sees this gift as a new opportunity that will create a more impactful state League for all New Yorkers. While this is a significant gift, it does not fully fund the State League in perpetuity. In fact, the donor hopes the gift will inspire others to support the mission of the League. This gift provides a huge endorsement of the state League and will also benefit local Leagues around the State."

LWVNYS EDUCATION FOUNDATION BALANCE SHEET

June 30, 2022

ASSETS

Current Assets

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Checking Account | 9,480 |
| Savings Account | 20,955 |
| Centennial Endowment Fund | 37,875 |
| B. Bibby Endowment Fund | 216,674 |
| Reserve Fund | 630,932 |
| RNS Endowment Fund | 521,146 |
| Prepaid Expenses/Insurance Exp. | 7,216 |
| Accounts Receivable | 3,914 |
| Total Current Assets | \$1,448,192.00 |

Fixed Assets

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Building, Equipment, Furnishings, Software | 240,539 |
| Land | 18,000 |
| Accum Depreciation – Building, Eqmt, Furnishings, Software | -145,004 |
| Total Fixed Assets | \$113,535 |

Other Assets

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Grants Management | 162,153 |
| Total Other Assets | \$162,153 |

TOTAL ASSETS **\$ 1,723,880**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Total Liabilities **\$22,064**

Equity

Temp Restricted Net Asset
Grants Management **110,530**

Total Temporary Restricted Net Asset **\$110,530**

Permanently Restricted
B. Bibby Endowment Fund 216,674
Centennial Endowment Fund 37,875

Total Permanently Restricted **521,146**

Unrestricted Fund Balance 775,695
Net Income 815,591

Total Equity **\$1,701,816**

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY **\$1,723,880**

Income and Expenses 2021-2022

Income

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Grant Income (local League) | 78,711 |
| Member Contributions | 1,084,525 |
| Board Donations | 52,677 |
| Community/Corporate Donations | 5,816 |
| Grant Income | 172,745 |
| Direct Mail Income | 27,274 |
| Other Income | 6,527 |
| Investment Income (Loss) | -225,899 |

Total Income **\$1,202,376**

Expenses

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Educational Programs | |
| Youth Programs | 6,740 |
| Advocacy Education | 16,501 |
| Voter Service Education | 14,885 |
| Redistricting Grant work | 121,466 |
| DEI Grants | 3,500 |
| Other Education Programs | 3,919 |
| Total Educational Programs | \$167,011 |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Local League Educational Programs | |
| Grants to Local Leagues | 67,955 |
| Total Local League Educational Programs | \$67,955 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Building Expenses | |
| Building, Equipment and Leases | 6,429 |
| Utilities | 4,569 |
| Maintenance and Upkeep | 3,242 |
| Insurance | 2,896 |

Total Building Expenses **17,136**

Total Administration **55,526**

Total Dues and Subscriptions **16,285**

Total Development & Fundraising **42,661**

Total Expenses **\$366,574**

Net Ordinary Income **\$835,802**

The financial information presented above is unaudited and subject to adjustments and modifications during the auditing process.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Donor Profile: Noreen McKee

Noreen McKee is a woman of many perspectives. After graduating from high school in York, Pennsylvania, she headed to Washington D.C. to take a federal government job. Once she got some “real life” experience she enrolled in college and completed a degree in Behavioral Science, which landed her a job in social work at Catholic Social Services in York. From there she joined the Jesuit Volunteer Corps along with her husband, Steve McKee, and headed to the Alaskan bush where they taught at St. Mary’s High School, an Eskimo and Indian boarding school.

From Alaska they moved back east to Brooklyn where Noreen earned her CPA certification and an MS in Accounting, and joined a boutique private investment firm that managed funds for New York City Employees, and Los Angeles fire and police pension fund among other accounts.

Motivated by the 2016 presidential election, Noreen joined and became very involved with the LWVNY and her home League in Troy, the League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County. “This was the tipping point”, she acknowledged. She reminds us that the LWVNY and local leagues do the important work of registering voters and make sure that information is available about candidates and the issues through Vote411.org and by sponsoring candidate forums. “We can make a difference by encouraging everyone to become informed and to take an active role in our democratic system.”

To that end, Noreen has served in leadership positions in her local leagues as well as taking an active role on the State League Committee on Election Administration Structure to review and recommend reforms of NYS Boards of Elections. “There needs to be a clear system of checks and balances and the BOEs must be transparent and accountable to assure that best practices are followed. Who better to address such issues since the State League and all the local leagues are on the front lines of democracy in action.”

Noreen also noted that voter suppression is a growing problem in the United States and she has first-hand experience with such suppression in New York State.



As part of her work with the League, she was instrumental in forming a coalition of community groups to put pressure on the Rensselaer County Board of Elections to establish an early voting site in Troy to provide equitable access to minority and low income voters. From those efforts, NYS Attorney General Letitia James filed a successful lawsuit which forced the Board to comply with the law, and an early voting polling site was created in the heart of downtown Troy in 2021.

Noreen’s multiple perspectives give her an appreciation for the mission and work of the LWVNY and local leagues where her interest, activism and support make a difference and where her persistence in the face of resistance to voter access made a crucial difference to the outcome of the court case.

In a recent conversation, Noreen asked why don’t more people belong to the Leagues on every level and support it with time, talent and treasure. We agreed that there is a loyal base of membership and a long-standing core of support, but acknowledge that the State and local leagues need more resources to carry out the mission of Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy in an optimum way.

“Voters are being systematically disenfranchised. Candidates frequently get to choose their voters rather than the other way around!”

One of the current challenges for the League is how best to spread the word about its mission and how to reach and empower new voters. As Noreen pointed out, voter registration may be up, but voter turnout is not at least in local elections.

Noreen and active members like her invite others to join them in this important work.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

The League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc. is pleased to acknowledge the following members and community partners whose philanthropy in the 2021-2022 fiscal year has supported our efforts. Thank you for being part of our community and making our success possible!

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1919 SOCIETY

The 1919 Society was created in celebration of the state League's 90th birthday to ensure that the League is able to maintain its vibrant reputation in the 21st century. **Remembering a charity in your will or other estate plans is a powerful way to ensure that your values survive you and that the League remains robust for the next generation.** In addition to providing a wonderful legacy for the community, bequests decrease the size of your taxable estate.

Members of the 1919 Society as of June 30, 2022:

Barbara Bartoletti

Helen Bailey Bayly

Laura Ladd Bierman

Paula Blum

Anne Burton

**Lori Dawson and
Michael LaBelle**

Pattie Garrett

Elizabeth Hubbard*

Katharine W. Lloyd, MD

Sally Robinson

Evelyn Stock

**Deceased*

If you are interested in finding out more about making gifts of stock, gifts from your IRA, or naming the League in your will, please contact Laura Ladd Bierman, at Laura@lwvny.org or (518) 465-4162.

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Joan Eschner
Priscilla Fairbank
Cheryl Feldman
Mona and Howard Finkelberg
Patricia and Tom Fox
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Every effort was made to make this report as accurate as possible. Should you notice an error or omission in our donor list, please contact the LWNYS office at (518) 465-4162 for a correction.

**The LWNYS Education Foundation was pleased to
receive grants from the following during 2021-2022:**

**Craig Newmark Philanthropies, Inc.
League of Women Voters of the US
NYS Census Equity Fund**

Sustaining Support – Recurring EF Donors

Many donors find it easier to set up monthly or quarterly gifts to the EF. These gifts are made with a credit card and happen automatically on the schedule that works best for our donors. Sustaining support like this means the EF can continue to provide meaningful resources for New York State voters. Thanks to our 2021/2022 EF recurring donors:

**Aaron and
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William Trompeter
Lori Robinson**

**Susan Schwarz
Janalyn
Travis-Messer
Roberta and
Peter Wiernik**

**For more information on making recurring gifts to the League, please
contact Laura Ladd Bierman, at (518) 465-4162 or Laura@lwvny.org.**

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Donor Profile: Suzy Johnson

Suzy Johnson is a baby boomer and has long been an activist and participant in civil discourse and community work on many levels. Both as a child and as an adult she has lived all over the country though for some years now she has been happily ensconced in upstate New York on the shores of Lake Champlain. Like so many other League of Women Voter members she responded to a call from a friend to join her local League. In Suzy's case she was invited to be a debate timer back in 2010. Over the last decade or so Suzy has taken on a variety of assignments, including as (co)president of the League of Women Voters of the North Country (serving Clinton, Essex and Franklin counties).

"It is crucial to get more young people involved with the League. The training and experience the League provides makes a huge difference . . . everything from the Students in Albany program for high school students to a renewed interest in curriculum for civics classes to holding various leadership positions in the League. I learned a lot from activities as well as from the offices I have held over the years", she said. Suzy mentioned naturalization ceremonies as being particularly meaningful and important. "New citizens have made a great effort to qualify to become a member of this country and they are eager to use their newly earned rights. The League gives them, and everyone else for that matter, the tools to be informed citizens."

Suzy's leadership roles have given her an appreciation of how the State League supports the work of local leagues. "Training, materials, the Students in Albany program as well as Vote411 and the Statewide conference provide encouragement and substantive content that enrich the local leagues."

These days Suzy is concerned about voter access and participation. "It's great to see voter registration numbers up. The next step, the crucial step, is to see an increase in voter participation!"



Donor Profile: Phoebe Bender

"I grew up in a political family," said Phoebe Powell Bender. She explained that she did not mean partisan: she meant political, as in civically active and well informed about her community, her state and her country.

Several members of her family held state and county-wide leadership posts in their registered parties and public issues were a lively topic of discussion at home.

The first time Phoebe voted was in the 1952 election and she had to do it with an absentee ballot because she was in Boston at college. (away at school). She has not missed an election since!



Once she and her husband, the late Matthew Bender, returned to the Albany area Phoebe began what has turned out to be a long career as a community volunteer. One of her most rewarding experiences was as a member of the New York State Women's Legislative Forum. In its heyday this organization met weekly during the legislative session. She and other active members did in-depth research on priority issues on the legislative calendar and reported back to the general members. She arranged for legislative leaders to attend meetings to discuss issues as well.

"This is a theme that runs through the League of Women Voters", said Phoebe. "Once women got the right to vote they took that right/responsibility very seriously and they made sure they understood what the issues and pros and cons were". While Phoebe was never directly involved as a volunteer with LWVNY she has been very supportive over the years and acknowledges the importance of the materials produced by the State League as well as their advocacy work.

In addition to the Legislative Forum, Phoebe was active with Common Cause, eventually serving as the first statewide president.

When talking about the League of Women Voters, Phoebe is quick to point out that the League is one of the major trusted good government organizations. "Education about issues and candidates is extremely important and you can get everything you need to make an informed decision from the League of Women Voters. They produce 'how to vote' information in several languages, they sponsor candidate nights and they make people aware of ballot propositions. The neutrality of the organization is key."

When asked about any concerns she has about the State League, Phoebe said she wants to make sure that people appreciate all that the League does. "Does everyone know that the State League organizes and runs the Students in Albany program for high school students from around the state? Are people aware of how much teaching and training the State League offers," she asked. "That is why I support the League of Women Voters of New York State. The small staff and volunteers all over the state stick to the mission of empowering voters and defending democracy."

2021/2022 LOCAL LEAGUES IN NEW YORK STATE

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Albany County | North Country serving Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties |
| Allegany & Cattaraugus Counties (Members at Large) | North East Westchester |
| Brookhaven | Oneonta |
| Broome/Tioga Counties | Port Washington/Manhasset |
| Buffalo/Niagara | Rensselaer County |
| Cazenovia | Rivertowns |
| Central Nassau County | Rochester Metro |
| Chautauqua County | Rockland County |
| Cooperstown | Rye, Rye Brook, Port Chester |
| Cortland | Saratoga County |
| East Nassau County | Scarsdale |
| Putnam County | Schenectady County |
| Geneva | Smithtown |
| Great Neck MAL (Members at Large) | Southwest Nassau County |
| Hamptons, Shelter Island & North Fork | St. Lawrence MAL (Members at Large) |
| Huntington | Steuben and Chemung Counties |
| Larchmont/Mamaroneck | Syracuse Metropolitan Area |
| Long Beach | Tompkins County |
| Mid-Hudson Region | Utica/Rome Metro Area |
| New Castle | White Plains |
| New Rochelle | Inter-League Organizations |
| New York City | Nassau County ILO |
| | Suffolk County ILO |
| | Westchester County ILO |

“America, as the world’s greatest proponent of democracy, has good reason to demand of herself civic and social consciousness, tolerance, justice, high standards of political honesty – for those we must strive if we are to defend our democracy by making it a shining example.”

– *The League of Women Voters of NYS, 1946*

