



The League of Women Voters of New York State
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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

State Board Updates **September 2022**

Local League To Do's (email: lwvny@lwvny.org or fax 518-465-0812)

- Order copies of Voter Guide Part II (with candidate info for statewide races and ballot proposal); see attached.
- Submit data tracking form to LWVNYS by Oct. 10 (and the 10th of each month)
- Start collecting data requested on voter service survey (see below and attached)
- Submit comments to LWVUS by Oct 11 on proposed policies on Local League and Member Rights and Responsibilities (see below)

Events Calendar

- Oct 5, 6:30-8 pm, Civic Education Series: District Attorneys (via Zoom)
- Oct 6, 7:00 pm, Women and The Vote Film Screening (NYS Museum, Albany)
- Oct 11, 6:30-7:30 pm, NYS Environmental Bond Act (via Zoom)
- Oct 12, 6:00-7:30 pm, LWVNYS Youth Committee Back-to-School Event (via Zoom)
- Oct 13, 3pm -6pm, PowHer Summit (via Zoom)
- Oct 18, Dear White Woman: Workshop & Book Discussion (via Zoom)
- Oct 19, 7:00 pm, President's Zoom event on Nominating Committees

President's Report, Judie Gorenstein, judieL728@aol.com

THE TIME IS NOW

I know everyone has been busy all through the spring and summer doing all they can to empower voters and defend our democracy. I do appreciate all you have done but there is always more that can be done. As we approach Election Day, with less than weeks until early voting begins:

1. There is still time to register voters. (Last day to register is Oct. 14) The time is now!
2. There is still time to finalize what you will be doing to GOTV. Registering voters is important, getting out the vote is crucial. Have you reached out to all organizations and groups you have networked with in the past? Have you used social media, publicized VOTE411 and our texting service? The time is now.
3. There is still time to finalize plans and details for candidate events. Did you reach out to NY Disabilities to provide live human closed captioning and/or American sign language? If not and you want to accommodate voters with disabilities access to your virtual candidate events, the time is now!

4. There is time to look at the LWVNYS voter service survey to make sure you are keeping track of your activities (form due on Nov 18 and use online form at: <https://forms.gle/tFHrbdXBz71VWb6R6>). If you have not yet looked at it, the time is now!

Although voter services are major focus of LWVNY, it certainly is not all we do. Even in this very busy election cycle, there is so much Leagues are doing and being asked to do. Your LWVNYS board members have all been working towards achieving their short-term goals.

1. The Youth co-chairs, along with their committee, have completed a [Toolkit for Youth Programming](#) and scheduled a youth zoom meeting. Read their report and check out the toolkit for ideas. The time is now!
2. DEI co-chairs and task force have planned their next webinar and are planning a new 21 day challenge. Read their report and save Oct 18 at 7:00 on your calendar. The time is now!
3. Local League Support Co-chairs and their committee are now focused on the role of the nominating committee in strengthening local League boards. Read their report and invite the nominating chair in your local League to the next presidents zoom meeting (Oct. 19 at 7:00 pm). The time is now!
4. The next presidents' zoom is scheduled for **October 19th** at 7pm. This is a very important meeting for all presidents and nominating chairs to attend. Although we all need to focus on what needs to be done now, we also need to begin process of planning for the next slate of officers. What is needed to strengthen our board? Who can fulfill the roles? Where can we look? I know we are all so busy but save the date **October 19** at 7. The time is now!
5. The last presidents' zoom focused on data collection. We discussed LWVUS Rights and Responsibility Policy and their request for feedback. Have you sent back your feedback (due Oct 11 at <https://www.lwv.org/League-management/policies-guidance/proposed-member-rights-responsibilities-policy>)? If not the time is now! We also discussed monthly data collection for LWVNYS (Oct form is due **Oct 10** and use link at <https://forms.gle/jvfv1kFwbGC8QDsX7>). Have you begun the data collection? The time is now!

Yes, there is so much to do but our mission is so important! We can and we all will work together! The time is now!

State Office

LWVUS Data Tracking

LWVUS has required the state League to submit data on what our state and local Leagues are accomplishing to help determine the League's impact through its programs. The data tracking form was presented at the last Presidents' zoom event. This is a form for data of all of your educational events and more that you organize each month. This form should be completed by the 10th of each month starting with Oct. 10th. Here is a link to the online form: <https://forms.gle/jvfv1kFwbGC8QDsX7> . We realize that this is a lot to ask, but see if you can find someone (or more) to organize these responses each month. It really is important for us to report to US about all the wonderful things you all are doing – and it helps for evaluating impact (for your own evaluation, but also for reports to funders for grants). Do what you can and please let us know if you have questions. I have attached a word version of the form but ask that you complete it using the online form as it makes it easier for the state League to combine and report to LWVUS.

LWVUS Proposed Rights and Responsibilities for Local Leagues and Members

The LWVUS has also proposed policies on League Rights and Responsibilities and Member Rights and Responsibilities that were presented on the Presidents' zoom event. Attached is a Powerpoint that summarizes these proposed policies, as well as word documents of each of the proposed policies. You should discuss these proposed policies with your board and provide comments or feedback to LWVUS **by OCT. 11 on the form at the bottom of the page of each of the policies:** [League Rights and Responsibility Policy](#) and a [Member Rights and Responsibility Policy](#).

Upcoming Programs (advertise to all members and will be in state Voter)

Civic Education Series: District Attorneys, October 5th, 6:30 - 8 PM

Register [HERE](#)

Presented by the New York State Public Affairs Committee of the Junior League (NYSPAC), this educational event highlights the importance of local elections and local offices. This month, join LWVNYS and NYSPAC to discuss the role that Districts Attorneys play in local government.

Women and The Vote Film Screening, October 6th, 7 PM

In-Person at the New York State Museum (Albany)

Filmed on Election Day 2020 in five cemeteries across New York State, Women and the Vote is a mosaic-style documentary on the past 100 years of women's political equality, the present moment, and the possibilities for the future. Interviews and verité footage of visitors in the Bronx, Sleepy Hollow, Auburn, Rochester, and Buffalo intertwine with rich historical elements to generate connections between New York's rich suffragist legacy and contemporary voters. The screening will be followed by a brief Q&A with the filmmaker, Linda Moroney. [Click HERE for more information.](#)

NYS Environmental Bond Act, October 11th, 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Register [HERE](#)

Learn more about the Environmental Bond Act that will be on the ballot in November! The League of Women Voters will be joined by speakers from The Nature Conservancy, WeAct, and the NYS Conference of Operating Engineers to learn how the Bond Act will impact the environment, the labor market, and environmental justice in NYS.

LWVNYS Youth Committee Back-to-School Event, October 12th, 6 - 7:30 PM

Register [HERE](#)

This summer, LWVNYS' Youth Committee used all the input from this year's regional training to craft a resource page on our website. Our task force members are working on three areas of focus for fresh directives to engage our youth: social media literacy, challenges in the traditional classroom post-pandemic, and using more college campuses as election poll sites including how to organize campus partners for continued support.

Come and join us on October 12th with feedback on any summer projects that your local League has found to be successful and other ideas that can help us better serve the thoughts, judgments, and impressions our young voters have on the sustained civic engagement process.

2022 PowHer New York Equality Summit, October 13th, 3 - 6 PM

Register [HERE](#)

Join LWVNYS and PowHer New York for a conversation focusing on the urgent change that is needed to build an equitable, just, and inclusive economy. This unique gathering of advocates and thought

leaders in business, non-profit, union, and government will inspire attendees to think and act boldly during this unprecedented moment created by the pandemic and escalating threats to women's rights.

Dear White Woman: Workshop & Book Discussion, October 18th

Watch for the Zoom Link in the coming weeks!

Book author Kimberlee Yolanda Williams and NYT Best Selling Author Debby Irving's workshop on getting past biases into a real sisterhood. Dear White Woman, Please Come Home is Kimberlee Yolanda Williams' invitation to white women longing for authentic friendship with Black and brown women, the kind of friendship with no place for secrets, the kind of relationship where truth-telling is welcome... even when it hurts.

This workshop is brought to you by the LWVNYS in its continuing effort to support our collective journey toward policy and practice changes that will ensure an inclusive and equitable organization.

Voter Services, Nancy Rosenthal, VP for Voter Services,

nancyrosenthal9@gmail.com

Now is the time for Leagues to execute what we do so well: registering new voters by October 14th, handling absentee ballot requests timely, GOTV during early voting October 29th –November 6th, and having candidate forums where we collaborate with neighboring Leagues and other organizations!

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Register [HERE](#)

Learn more about the Environmental Bond Act that will be on the ballot in November! The League of Women Voters will be joined by speakers from The Nature Conservancy, WeAct, and the NYS Conference of Operating Engineers to learn how the Bond Act will impact the environment, the labor market, and environmental justice in NYS.

Voter Guide Part II

Voter Guide Part II will include candidate information for the statewide races (Governor/Lt. Governor, Attorney General and Comptroller) and the US Senate race. It will also include information about the bond act that is on the ballot in November. It is at the printer and should be ready for shipping this week. Place your orders now using the attached form. The English version has been posted on the state League website at: <https://lwny.org/voting/>; the Spanish version is at the translators and will be posted later this week and then also sent to the printer.

Vote 411

Vote411.org goes live October 1st. Please contact candidates in your League's area who have yet to respond; ask Milly Czerwinski milly@lwny.org for the list of those candidates and reach out to get them to respond so that Vote411.org users can be educated and informed on all candidates running for office. On Oct. 1, we will send out templates for a press release and Letter to the Editor that you can customize and submit to your local media; we will also distribute a flyer that you can print out and hang in town halls, libraries, grocery stores and elsewhere in your communities to advertise Vote 411.

NVRD

National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) is a bigger event each year! And many of our Leagues participated again this year! Send in your photos and brag about your successes! Sharing our

successful efforts lifts us all! We look forward to seeing all of your data from the day (and rest of election season) in the Voter Service Survey.

Disability Rights NY offer to provide closed captioning and ASL at virtual candidate events

Disability Rights New York is interested in partnering with local Leagues of Women Voters across NYS in efforts to host candidate forums and/or debates ahead of the General Election. For this election, DRNY has the resources to partner with the Leagues' virtual events. We are unable to organize partnerships for in-person events ahead of the November election. As a partner, DRNY can assist in embedding the following accommodations into your events:

1. Candidate to offer visual descriptions – at the introduction of each candidate, DRNY encourages candidates to share an audio description of themselves, to ensure people with vision disabilities have those visual details.
2. Live human generated closed captioning – DRNY will organize and pay for closed captioning in events held on Zoom.
3. American Sign Language made available upon request – DRNY will organize and pay for ASL translation service to be embedded in virtual events on Zoom.

If your local League would like DRNY as a partner in your candidate event, please contact Jenessa Seymour Jenessa.Seymour@drny.org with relevant information. From there, DRNY can provide guidance and help organize accessibility features for your event.

Voter Service Survey

A reminder that the Voter Service Survey is due November 18th! Collecting all the data for the survey on an ongoing basis will make the timely filing of the survey very easy! **YOU MUST COMPLETE THE SURVEY BY NOVEMBER 18th**. Attached is a fillable Microsoft word document that you can complete and send to (email), as well as a form to help track voter registrations at drives. We have also created an online version, which you can fill out here: <https://forms.gle/tFHrbdXBz71VWb6R6> .

Texting Service (text VoteNY to 474747)

Encourage members and voters to sign up for the League's texting service (text VoteNY to 474747) to get timely reminders on voting.

CHCANYS

Thanks to our partnership with Community Health Care Association of NYS (CHCANYS), we can register more voters as they attend to their healthcare needs. These 800 centers across NY State will facilitate registering new voters on an ongoing basis. Contact Erica Smitka erica@lwny.org to see which centers are in your League area.

The Voter Service Committee members have their local League Voter Service contacts on speed dial! There seems a plethora of information to share this season! We have also had such good queries from VS League representatives: particulars for holding candidate forums, questions that can be asked of judicial candidates, which Leagues share the same candidates running for an officer, how best to keep and organize the data for the VS Survey due November 18th, how to respond to misinformation about voting. Many of the answers (and more) are available in our Voter Services Toolkits – see them on the website at: <https://lwny.org/local-Leagues/#tool> .

Keep the questions and comments coming! We are here for you, to assist in any way we can!

Issues and Advocacy, Sally Robinson, VP for Issues and Advocacy, sally.s.robinson@gmail.com, and Erica Smitka, LWNYS Deputy Director, Erica@lwny.org

Legislative Session

As we head into the fall, many of our state committees have been meeting to discuss priorities for the next legislative session. If you would like to get involved with any of the following committees, please reach out to the committee leads listed below:

- Criminal Justice Committee, Co-Chairs
Vivione Marshal (LWV of the City of New York)- vivione@lwnyc.org
Richard Rifkin (LWV of Albany County)- richardrifkin54@gmail.com
- Energy, Agriculture, and the Environment Committee
Beth Radow (LWV of Larchmont/Mamaroneck)- enradow@gmail.com
- Healthcare Committee
Judy Esterquest (LWV of Port Washington/Manhasset)- esterquest@gmail.com

Other Issue Specialists include:

- Campaign Finance Reform
Sally Robinson (LWV of the City of New York) - sally.s.robinson@gmail.com
- Education Finance
Marian Bott (LWV of the City of New York)- sydneymab@aol.com
- Election Law
Kate Doran (LWV of the City of New York)- kateadoran@gmail.com
- Equality of Opportunity, Domestic Violence, and Human Trafficking
Barbara Thomas (LWV of Saratoga County)- bkoepicust@gmail.com
- Medical Aid in Dying
Barbara Thomas (LWV of Saratoga County)- bkoepicust@gmail.com

Ethics Reform

The new Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government (the “Commission” or CELG) is coming together and the League along with several other good government groups has been monitoring the nominations and their progress. In early September, we encouraged them to get to work as the New York State Independent Review Committee (composed of the state’s law school deans) had approved seven out of eleven commissioners, enough commissioners appointed for a quorum – the legal minimum required to conduct business.

More recently, the League and good government groups wrote a letter encouraging the new commission to take part in the following practices. We identified the creation of the new Commission as an opportunity to “reset” public and state officers and employees’ expectations about state ethics oversight.

We’ve asked the Commissioners to do the following:

1. Clearly firewall Commissioners from the elected officials (or their representatives) who appointed them (prohibit ex parte communications).
2. Fully use the Commission’s powers under state law to fulfill the Commission’s mission of restoring public trust in state government.

3. Pursue enforcement matters promptly, including previous Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE) matters.
4. Reexamine current protocols and procedures regarding advisory opinions to avoid abuse of authority (such as by requiring Commission approval of all opinions regarding agency heads and statewide elected officials).
5. Appoint an Executive Director after a nationwide search.
6. Ensure state workers feel confident in reporting allegations of misconduct.
7. Require trauma-informed harassment training for all Commissioners and senior staff.
8. Increase transparency and access to public information through use of open data for financial disclosure reports, improving the lobbying database, collaborating with the Attorney General's New York Open Government portal, and developing clear guidelines regarding disclosing the status of investigations.
9. Hold an annual hearing starting in 2022.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI), Regina Tillman, 3rd Vice President for DEI, rmt370@gmail.com, and Crystal Joseph, DEI Task Force Co-Chair, campus@lwnyc.org

Good fortune smiled upon us and we easily scored a rescheduling of the workshop that had originally been planned for April. Remarkably, both Kimberlee Yolanda Williams and Debby Irving - as featured co-presenters - were available on a date in October!

So, please do make plans to join us and “SAVE THE DATE” of **October 18th** at 5:00pm – 7:00pm. The current agenda begins with the discussion of Ms. William’s inaugural entry as an author with her book, “Dear White Woman – Please Come Home”, before proceeding into the workshop portion. Look for registration info shortly as well as more information on how to obtain a copy of the book (maybe even signed), which includes a foreword written by Debby Irving.

We can sense it in the air... so many citizens of this country, our members included, want to do something more than eat turkey for Thanksgiving (November 24th) and turkey leftovers on Native American Heritage Day (November 25th)!

Join us for another amazing **21 Day Challenge**; this one entitled the “Racial Equity Indigenous Challenge” and it begins on November 6th. With that Challenge, we will conduct a virtual DEI Drop-In Session during November to discuss your experiences with it. Plus, we will distribute a new one pager on “Land Acknowledgements” that month, developed by one of your DEI Task Force members, Linda McKenney.

With this activity undertaken during November, we are pretty sure that you will be provided the stimulation for connecting the information with your family and friends, or your local League, or engaging another organization you are connected with in new conversations about the Indigenous People of the Americas. If any questions as you go along, or miss any of the online registration forms for accessing these activities, please feel free to connect with me at my email: rmt370@gmail.com .

Local League Support Committee, Joy Rosenzweig and Kathy Stein, Co-Chairs, joyrose6@gmail.com and kstein1@twcny.rr.com

Nominating Committees: Powerful & Vital, but Misunderstood

As part of our Membership and Leadership training, the Local League Support Committee is now focusing on using nominating committees to strengthening local League boards. During our Presidents' call at 7:00pm on Wednesday, October 19th, we'll be discussing how these committees help fill boards with qualified people possessing necessary skill sets. We urge all Local League Presidents to attend and bring along your Nominating Committee chairs.

LWVNYS Nominating Committee Chair, Kate Willower Jankowski,
kwillower@hotmail.com

Every other year, the State League Board Nominations Committee undertakes the task of nominating Board members that will help responsibly carry out the mission of the state League. As with all nominating committees, we endeavor to nominate a diverse group of people who will bring experience and passion to the Board. Thankfully, the state League has very clear by-laws governing the nominating committee's work so our task is clearly defined and transparent.

“The board shall consist of the officers of the LWVNYS, up to five but not less than three elected directors, and up to four appointed directors.

The officers of the LWVNYS shall be a president, a first vice-president, with up to but no more than three additional vice-presidents, and either a secretary and a treasurer or a combined position of secretary/treasurer. The number and order of vice-presidents and whether the offices of secretary and treasurer shall be combined shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee. Any of those offices may not be eliminated or combined until the term of an elected officer is concluded. The Officers shall be elected by the convention and hold office until the conclusion of the next convention or until their successors have been elected and qualified.”

The Nominating Committee is made up of three elected League members and two Board members nominated by the President of the state League Board. Every other Fall, we begin the process of building the slate by having the nominating chair attend a state League Board meeting. We then interview each current Board member asking a series of standard questions that include:

- Tell me about your experience as a LWVNYS Board member so far.
- What do you think are the strengths of the current Board?
- What do you think would help make it stronger?
- Are you interested in continuing your service? If so, in what capacity? If not, why not?
- Do you know any prospective Board candidates that you would recommend we consider? In what capacity/Why?

The answers to these questions inform our process as we build the slate. They allow us to know which Board members would like to continue serving, what areas of expertise are represented on the Board and what areas we might need to cover with new members, and give us some leads on others Board members have worked with who might be ready and willing to step into a leadership role. It is important to note that, just because someone is willing to continue service on the Board, that does not mean they are guaranteed a renewal of membership. Because the Board is relatively small, the nominating committee may choose to nominate new candidates to give others a chance at a leadership position and/or increase expertise or diversity on the Board.

After we interview all the current Board members, we put a notice in the SBU and Voter to ask if anyone would like to nominate (or self-nominate) any candidates for the Board. We then begin outreach to those potential candidates. Through calls and interviews, we determine if these potential candidates are interested and would fill needs identified on the Board. As we conduct this outreach, we are ever aware of our goal to build diversity on the Board. We consider diversity in many areas—race, gender, geography, expertise, age, and experience as a League member. We consider the best slate to include people of diverse backgrounds who can offer multiple perspectives as the state League moves into the future.

We often look to local League representatives and Board members to nominate leaders in their ranks as the best way to identify our next state Board members. We are beginning our process to create the next slate now and would love to hear from you if you, or anyone you know, would be interested in serving. You can contact me at kwillower@hotmail.com to self-nominate or nominate someone you know.

In March of every other year, we present our proposed slate to the current Board. That slate is then voted on by delegates during the state Convention and our new Board members begin their two-year terms leading this exciting and dynamic organization.

Youth Committee, Crystal Joseph and Nick Doran, Co-Chairs,
campus@lwvnyc.org and ndoran33@gmail.com

Welcome back to another school year and great opportunities on the horizon with our Leagues. This summer our youth steering committee used all the input from this year's regional training to craft a resource page on our state website. In many cases, you will notice that all of the successful programs which serve students well, across the state, were included in our toolkit which can be adaptable for a variety of student learners, leaders and used for outreach or training events. If your local League is like most, the challenge is always understanding the audience, abilities and discerning which program model will work best. Over the past few months, we posed as many questions to our League leaders, student members and received as much input as possible to help continue to answer the call to civic readiness and election preparedness. With much thought, this toolkit illustrates the common areas that schools, community groups and campuses have found to be helpful training practices from our organization. Our hope is that you will have the opportunity to review the toolkit and join us in early October when we host our back-to-school webinar. Presently, our task force members are working on three areas of focus for fresh directives to engage our youth: social media literacy, challenges in the traditional classroom post pandemic and using more college campuses as election poll-sites including how to organize campus partners for continued support. Come and join us this October with feedback on any summer projects that your local League has found to be successful and other ideas that can help us better serve the thoughts, judgements, and impressions our young voters have on the sustained civic engagement process.

Students Inside Albany Conference, Laura Ladd Bierman, Laura@lwvny.org

The 2023 Students Inside Albany Conference is planned **for Sunday, May 21 through Wed, May 23** at the Hampton Inn in Albany. More information on recruitment for students is forthcoming. Start planning, however, if your local League would like to send one or two students – we will solicit this info in the next week or so.

**LWV and the United Nations: Jane Colvin (LWVNYS Board Member),
janecolvin914@aol.com**

Hello! My name is Jane Colvin and I'm one of five members of the 2022 LWVUS UN Observer Team appointed by President Deborah Turner. I am delighted and honored to be a part of the League's long and distinguished history with the UN which began in 1945 when President Truman invited the League to serve as consultant to the US Delegation at the UN Charter Conference. Since that time, the League has continued its presence at the United Nations through its UN Observers team; in 1997 the League was granted Special Consultative Status by the ECOSOC which allows it to make formal oral or written statements to the UN and be consulted by the UN in areas in which the League has expertise.

Each member of the LWVUS UN Observer Team focuses on working on a particular issue or with a UN group. On behalf of the Team, I chose to work with and become a member of the New York NGO Commission on the Status of Women (NGO CSW/NY), a non-governmental organization dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It provides an important forum for the dissemination of information, discussion and exchange of ideas on United Nations' initiatives to advance the status of women and girls.

It is one of many the civil society organizations that works along with the official UN CSW, created in 1946, whose members are appointed from UN member states. Each year, the UN CSW focuses on a priority theme for discussion and in the Spring holds a two-week session at the UN Headquarters; it invites accredited organizations like the NGOCSW/NY to contribute by holding educational events and meetings that run parallel to its official UN session. This year's priority theme is "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls." During the two weeks of the UN CSW, NGO CSW/NY organizes hundreds of events that inform, engage, and inspire grassroots efforts and advocacy needed to empower women and girls. The LWVUS UN Observer Team will be conducting a panel discussion in March to which you all will be invited.

In the meantime, I would like to draw your attention to the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are at the core of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that member states adopted in 2015. The 17 goals aim to bring about a more just and equitable world, including through ending extreme poverty, achieving gender equality, and spurring economic growth, while also tackling climate change and preserving the natural environment. In short, they are a sweeping vision for improving the lives of the world's people. by 2030.

The SDGs and its distinctive wheel have become well-known, but for many of us here in New York and across the United States they may exist on a purely conceptual level: we don't often think about how they apply to our own lives. In succeeding SBUs, I will explore different Goals and how we, in League and as individuals, can contribute to their implementation.

In the meantime, to get a head start about the goals and how you can contribute, I invite you to click on the following: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/news/communications-material/>