



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  
 April 2021**

**Local League To Do's (email: [lwvny@lwvny.org](mailto:lwvny@lwvny.org) or call 518-465-4162)**

- Register your delegates for State Convention by May 1 (this Saturday!) to obtain the rate of \$50; \$75 after May 1
- Voter Guide Part I in English and Spanish are now available. Orders yours by emailing [Laura@lwvny.org](mailto:Laura@lwvny.org).
- Complete and return an Updated Local League Contacts form (attached) with your new Officers and Board Members

**President's Report, Suzanne Stassevitch, [smstass@mac.com](mailto:smstass@mac.com)**



**STATE CONVENTION!!!! June 7-12, 2021 Virtual**  
 Convention is Coming!! Are you ready?

Plans for the 59th LWVNY State Convention are being developed. Have you registered yet? If not, you can **register online** at: [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/ZpfeEihvqiA-AOCUoRKMQ](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/ZpfeEihvqiA-AOCUoRKMQ)

**Register by May 1 (this Saturday!) to receive the early bird special rate of \$50! After Sat, the rate will be \$75.**

You can see the full Registration Kit here:  
<https://www.lwvnyonline.org/convention/2021/Registration-Kit-2021-FINAL.pdf>

The **Pre Convention Kit** is also now available. View and download it by clicking here: **[Pre Convention Kit](#)**. In the Kit is all the information that will be voted on during the plenary sessions at Convention: Nominating Committee Report of 2021-2023 Board, Proposed 2021-2022 LWVNY State Budget, Proposed 2021-2023 Program, and Proposed Bylaw Amendments.

**The Agenda for Convention is as follows:**

**Monday, June 7**  
 5:30-7:30 pm DEI training: Shay Stewart-Bouley  
*Beginning Our Journey Toward a More Equitable and Inclusive Organization*

**Tuesday, June 8-Thursday, June 10,**  
 5:30-9:00 pm Workshops and Caucuses

**Friday, June 11**

5:30 pm                      Opening Plenary Session  
6:00 pm                      Speaker: Dr. Deborah Turner, LWVUS President  
6:30-9:00 pm                Plenary Session (continues)

**Saturday, June 8**

9:30 – 10:30                Workshops and Caucuses  
10:45 -12:00                Workshops and Caucuses  
1:00 - 5:00                 Plenary Session

The tentative list of **workshops and speakers** are also in the Pre Convention Kit. After your register, you will be emailed a chart of all the workshops with links to register for the specific ones you choose; these registration links will be available by April 30. But, read about all the great workshops planned:

**Monday, June 7, 5:30-7:30 pm**

DEI Speaker: Ms. Shay Stewart-Bouley

**Tuesday, June 8, 5:30-7:00 pm**

- Virtual and Hybrid Candidate Events
- People Powered Fair Maps: Redistricting in NYS
- Media: Fact or Fake

**Tuesday, June 8, 7:30 – 9:00 pm**

- Concurrence with LWV of California’s Position on Criminal Justice
- Nonpartisanship: How to Lift Up Our Voices in Hyper-partisan Times

**Wednesday, June 9, 5:30 – 7:00 pm**

- Proposed Climate Change Resolution
- Modernization of Election Systems
- Social Media and Websites for Local Leagues

**Wednesday, June 9, 7:30 – 9:00 pm**

- Healthcare Through a DEI Lens
- Ranked Choice Voting
- GOTV: Building Effective Programs

**Thursday, June 10, 5:30 – 7:00 pm**

- Rural Places Matter: the LWV and the Other New York
- Changes in our Election Administration System

**Thursday, June 10, 7:30 – 9:00 pm**

- Carbon’s Big Foot and You
- NYYCI: Engaging Youth in Our Communities
- *Stand Up, Speak Out: The Personal Politics of Women’s Rights*

**Saturday, June 12, 9:30 – 10:30 am**

- LWVNYS Proposed 2021-2022 Budget
- LWVNYS Proposed Bylaw Amendments

**Saturday, June 12, 10:45 – 11:45 am**

- Program Planning
- Meet the Nominated Slate of Officers and Board Members
- Proposed Climate Change Resolution

REGISTER NOW SO YOU DON'T MISS OUT! Click on the link:

[https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/sZpfeEihvqiA-AOCUoRKMq](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/sZpfeEihvqiA-AOCUoRKMq)

**Advocacy: Sally Robinson, [sally.s.robinson@gmail.com](mailto:sally.s.robinson@gmail.com) and Jennifer Wilson, [Jennifer@lwny.org](mailto:Jennifer@lwny.org)**

**People's Hearing on New York State Redistricting  
Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm -8:00 pm**

Join us for the League of Women Voter's first ever virtual People's Hearing on New York State Redistricting! Our virtual hearing will allow New Yorkers from around the state to present testimony on why redistricting matters to them and their community of interest. Click here to register via Zoom for this event:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_SAAgQj4oSvynFjTLVfx6Hg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SAAgQj4oSvynFjTLVfx6Hg)

We are excited to announce LatinoJustice PRLDEF and APA Voice have signed on to co-sponsor our virtual hearing on why redistricting matters to communities of interest throughout New York State. Other expert testifiers include:

The Center for Law and Social Justice  
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund  
Disability Rights New York  
New York Immigration Coalition  
Chinese-American Planning Council  
NALEO Educational Fund  
Hispanic Federation  
New York Law School

The hearing will take place on April 29<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm and will be available via Zoom webinar and Facebook live.

**2021 State Budget Wins!**

The state budget officially passed on Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. We are pleased that this year many of the League's budget priorities were included in the final budget proposal. Through our lobbying efforts the League was able to secure:

- \$4 million for the state's first ever Independent Redistricting Commission;
- \$2 million for early voting expansions;
- \$5 million for the State Board of Elections to implement new election programs;
- \$20 million for county board of elections to reimburse the cost of technology and equipment upgrades;
- And full phase-in of Foundation Aid owed to New York's schools.

Thank you to our members who helped advocate for these critical funding needs! This successful budget outcome would not have been possible without your grassroots support.

The state budget is only one part of the League's extensive legislative agenda. Now that the budget has been passed our efforts will focus on ensuring an open and transparent redistricting process, expansion of early voting and absentee voting options, reforming the state's ethics enforcement agency, a New York State Voting Rights Act, a New York Health Act, medical aid in dying, and many other comprehensive good government reforms.

**Assembly Passes Restoration of Voting Rights for People on Parole**

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, the Assembly passed legislation to restore voting rights to all formerly incarcerated individuals including those on parole. This legislation will codify and improve an Executive Order put forward by Governor Cuomo in 2019 that allowed partial pardons to those who were on parole to allow them to re-register and vote. The Executive Order was limited in that each person would have to be regranted their voting rights by the

Governor's office and would have to re-register themselves without assistance from the Board of Elections or another agency.

This legislation will automatically restore voting rights to all justice-involved individuals after they complete their sentencing. The legislation also ensures that there is adequate notice to each individual when their voting right is restored and provides an opportunity for them to easily re-register as a voter. The bill passed in the Senate in February and is now headed to the Governor to be signed into law.

### **League Signs Joint Letter on Legislative Transparency During COVID**

Although COVID restrictions are beginning to lessen throughout the state, the Capitol and Legislative Office Building remain closed to the public. Both houses have moved their committee meetings and legislative sessions to a remote format but the Assembly has offered far less accommodations than the Senate.

The State Senate has webcast all meetings since 2009; the Assembly announced its intention to webcast in 2016, but has not fulfilled this promise.

The Assembly has recently used video conferencing to hold committee meetings, including the recent March 23rd meeting of the Judiciary Committee at which the Assembly's impeachment investigation was discussed. Yet despite this meeting being held via Zoom for Assembly Members and its lawyers, the public was only able to listen to the meeting through an audio feed. While audio for this meeting is archived on the Judiciary Committee website, audio for other committee meetings are not currently archived.

It is extremely difficult for the public to monitor committee meetings and understand members' votes and views on important legislation. The League and six of our good government partners sent a letter this week to NYS Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie asking that the Assembly fully webcast all its committee meetings and archive committee videos on its website. You can find a copy of our joint letter [here](#).

### **Voter Services: Judie Gorenstein, [judieL728@aol.com](mailto:judieL728@aol.com)**

#### **APRIL 15 ZOOM Meeting a Big Success**

The LWVNYS Voter Service Committee remains committed to working together with the local Leagues to fulfill our mission of registering and educating voters and GOTV. In March the three new toolkits had been completed, put on our website and emailed. On April 15, LWVNYS held a voter service zoom meeting to help Leagues prepare for the 2021 election season when they could probably hold both in-person and virtual activities and events. The importance of planning, reaching out to underserved communities and groups with low voter turnout was highlighted, as well as gathering data to see the impact of your efforts. Four Leagues from different geographic areas and targeting four different communities agreed to share what their Leagues had done and or were going to do this year. Presidents and voter service chairs of all local Leagues, MALS and ILOs were invited. (They were also encouraged to invite other members who were actively involved with voter service.) Over 80 people attended this April 15 meeting. They were able to hear excellent presentations and get some answers to some difficult questions?

#### **How Do We Reach Out to Low Voter Turnout Districts and Know If We Are Making An Impact?**

Joan Durant, of LWV of Syracuse, described their efforts for the past several in reaching out to underserved communities in Syracuse, using multiple GOTV tools and then measuring the impact of their efforts by obtaining data from BOE. In the first year they did this, the turnout increased by 48 %. Last year with COVID, it was more important than ever to work together and coordinating with other civic minded for the same goal, not competing with but supporting each other

#### **How Do We Reach Out to Hispanic Speaking Communities And Know If They Are Listening?**

Char Weigel of LWV of the Rivertowns discussed how their League conducted a virtual bilingual candidate event in the village of Sleepy Hollow, a community with approximately 50% people of color, with the vast

majority being Latino/Hispanic. Char presented a PowerPoint of the Myths, Enablers and Enhancers of their Language Accessible Candidate Forum. Doug French of LWV of Rye/Rye Brook added to the discussion. His League had held a bilingual candidate forum in a low voter turnout in Portchester where 65% of the population is Spanish speaking. Both Leagues have statistics of the number of listeners in Spanish translation while the event was being live streamed and then posted afterwards.

### **How Do We Reach Out To Our Youth And Know If We Are Making An Impact?**

Gail Crowe of LWV of Chautauqua County related how her League has collaborated with SUNY Fredonia, the westernmost member of the SUNY system and the American Democracy Project (ADP). Working with ADP members, professors and student representatives, the League focused on projects to educate, register and get students to the polls. The League collected data on their efforts and were able to quantify their results. Deb Coshier of LWV of Huntington discussed briefly her League's work with youth using youth to narrate their Register to Vote Powerpoint and having a college intern go wild and create a colorful eye-catching flyer to accompany the letter and Powerpoint when sent to administration and teachers at schools (No quantifying data yet as just being sent out).

### **How Do We Reach Out to People With Disabilities And Know If We Are Making An Impact On Registering And GOTV**

Barbara Gunderson of LWV of Buffalo centered her presentation around her League's collaboration with the Self-Advocacy Association of New York State, Inc. (SANYS), an organization founded, led and staffed by people with developmental disabilities for people with developmental disabilities. Their credo is "Nothing about us without us." The League did two zoom presentations in September and Oct 2021 how/when/where to vote and issue-based voting. Now this year her League's DEI committee is collaborating with the local chapter of the NAACP to develop presentations to garner a wider audience. In February they aired a Webinar "The Struggle for the Vote: Women, Black and Disabled. (No quantifying data yet)

The zoom meeting received rave reviews from those participating and those watching. Everyone was very impressed with what Leagues had accomplished. Some may have been overwhelmed with all that was discussed.

Does your League have new ideas or questions about virtual candidate events and GOTV? Contact [judiel728@aol.com](mailto:judiel728@aol.com) or your LWVNY Voter Service committee designee. Attend our workshops at Convention!