

Building Momentum

LWVNYS Biennial Convention
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Building Momentum

→ Purpose ←

→ Community ←

→ Action ←

Why members come to the League:

- Respect for the League
- To learn and to educate others
- Take / support action to improve their world

Purpose

“The League of Women Voters (LWV) is a nonpartisan, grassroots nonprofit dedicated to empowering everyone to fully participate in our democracy...”

Values: who we are

- ❖ nonpartisan
- ❖ democratic
- ❖ inclusive

Nonpartisan

“The League of Women Voters of the United States is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.”

ISSUES ARE NOT PARTISAN

NONPARTISAN DOES NOT MEAN APOLITICAL

DEMOCRACY IS A CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUE

Proudly and loudly nonpartisan

It's our culture

- Policies, guidelines, and best practices
- Hands on training and experiences
- Voicing values and policies
- Walking the talk
- Each one teach one

democratic values

“We will continue to uphold our nonpartisan values for fairness, justice, and equity because they form the foundation of a representative democracy. If we don’t strive to dismantle and improve the systems and structures that exclude individuals from their democratic rights to vote and participate, we will never be able to achieve a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.”

Inclusive

We strive as members and as a League, to center inclusivity:

As we work toward democracy

As we build our membership

“...the League has expanded our vision of a more inclusive democracy where all Americans ...can see themselves represented in our government.”

We nurture relationships to:

- Accomplish our goals
- Expand our reach
- Include “others”
- Develop synergy

Building community relationships

- Collaborate on our (League) work
- Support allied community organizations and groups
- Partner on issues for action which mirror our purpose

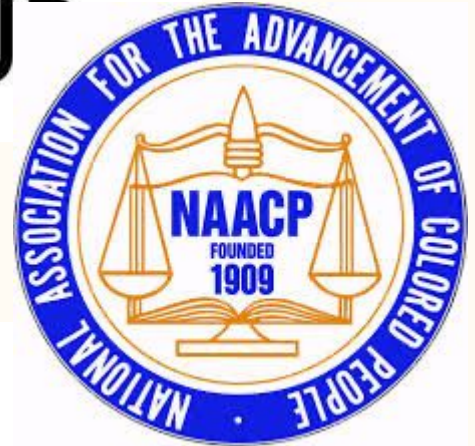
Expand our connections

- Libraries, Colleges & Universities
- Neighborhood Associations
- State, Local Representatives, School Boards
- Social Justice groups
- Churches, and others

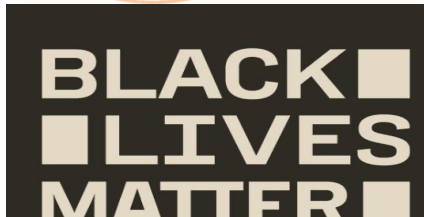
Partners...Friends...Community



SIERRA
CLUB



Capital Area
Urban League



**What are ways your League is
building community relationships?**

Relationships: Hazards and pitfalls

- Controversial associations
- Perceptions of the League
- Spread too thin; and,
- Mission drift

Navigating as a local League

- Point to positions and nonpartisanship
- Continuous review and discussion
- Transparency - clear and vocal about our standards and values
- Our league aims to speak with one voice

League work is ALL political action

Work toward change

Increase visibility and impact

Create opportunities to include both members and untapped communities*

Taking Political Action

- Advocate, Call, Lobby
- March, Rally, Demonstrate
- Call for Change, Accountability, Transparency
- Publish
- Show up, Stand up, Stand out

What are ways your League is visible in action?

Navigating as a local League

- Point to positions and nonpartisanship
- Continuous review and discussion - we re-weave the League over time
- Transparency - clear and vocal about our standards and values
- Our league aims to speak with one voice

Political Action: Hazards and pitfalls

- Controversial associations
- Perceptions of the League
- Spread too thin; and,
- Mission drift

Conversations - Discuss, Decide, Repeat

Continuous discussion (Board and leadership level), policies and guidelines, best practices, transparency.

Repeated decision-making.

These conversations are needed to clarify our purpose, to develop community relationships, and to take action on issues.

Consensus leads the way

Consensus determines the path, the slope, and the pace.

Major decisions are made in consensus so that subsequent issues and associated choices which arise can be addressed by members with confidence. There has to be trust:

- Members rely on leadership and the Board to center policies and values.
- Leadership relies on membership to reflect League values and consensus.

“A League will be a strong and effective political force to the degree that it can deal with and accept controversy, live with uncertainty, and avoid using its nonpartisan policy as a shield for not getting involved.”

Getting to Expansive and Active Membership

- **Stand on purpose**
- **Expand community connections**
- **Take political action**

...in summary, be VISIBLE

Momentum

**How do you weave purpose,
community relationships,
and political action into your League?**

LINKS TO RESOURCES

LWVUS LINKS

LWVUS About Us <https://www.lwv.org/about-us>

LWVUS Blog - Remaining Nonpartisan in Hyper-Partisan Times (February 10, 2021)
<https://www.lwv.org/blog/remaining-nonpartisan-hyper-partisan-times>

Guidance for Leagues about Nonpartisanship and Partnerships (March 31, 2025)
<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/policies-guidance/guidance-leagues-about-nonpartisanship-and-partnerships>

LWVNY LINKS

LWVNY - Action as an Engagement Tool (2023)
<https://lwvny.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Recruitment-and-Advocacy-Action-as-Engagement.pdf>

LOCAL LEAGUE LINKS

LWV Saratoga Non-Partisan Policy 2024 - [LWVSaratoga Non-Partisan Policy 2024-25](#)