

Voter Services: Judie Gorenstein, 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 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 Cosher 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 presentation 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 or your LWVNY Voter Service committee designee. Attend our workshops at Convention!