

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST PRESENTS

Threats to Voter Rights: What's at Stake? A Community Forum

Monday, September 17, at 7 p.m.

Veterans Room – Second Floor – Oak Park Public Library, 834 Lake Street

PANELIST BIOS

Ami Gandhi is the Director of Voting Rights and Civic Empowerment at Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights.

Ami's experience includes leading statewide voter protection for the 2016 election, advocating for communities of color during Illinois redistricting, advising local election boards as they implemented the first Hindi ballots in the country. She previously worked as the Executive Director of South Asian American Policy & Research Institute (SAAPRI), where she led initiatives in voting rights, immigrants' rights, and other civil rights and racial justice issues. Prior to her work at SAAPRI, Ami worked as the Legal Director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice Chicago and as a commercial litigation attorney at Freeborn & Peters LLP. Ami serves on the boards of Common Cause Illinois, the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, and the Language Access Committee of the Illinois Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission. Ami received the 2015 Changemaker Award from Chicago Fair Trade for her role in passing anti-sweatshop laws and the 2015 Public Interest Award from South Asian Bar Association of North America. Ami earned her J.D. from The George Washington University Law School and her B.A. in psychology and cognitive science from Indiana University.

Andy Kang is Executive Director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago.

Andy joined Advancing Justice | Chicago after serving as a staff attorney at the Legislative Reference Bureau, a non-partisan State agency that provides legal advice to the Illinois General Assembly regarding the drafting of legislation. Andy has practiced law in Chicago and Boston and was co-founder and President of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders for Clark, a national grass-roots organization that mobilized support for former presidential candidate General Wesley Clark (Ret.). He currently sits on the board of the Korean American Bar Association and has previously served on the City of Chicago's Commission on Human Relations, which investigates and adjudicates alleged violations of the Chicago Human Rights

Ordinance and Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance. Most recently, Andy successfully co-led the community's advocacy efforts to pass the Illinois TRUST Act and Automatic Voter Registration.

Andy received his J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law, where he was Chair of the Diversity Coalition and an active member of the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, and his B.A. in Political Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Edwin Yohnka is Director of Communications and Public Policy
For the Illinois American Civil Liberties Union.

Ed Yohnka began his job at the ACLU in June 1999. He serves as a primary spokesperson for the civil rights advocacy organization. He appears regularly on television and radio programs in Illinois and throughout the nation. Yohnka also is widely cited in newspapers and publications on legal and legislative matters related to the ACLU of Illinois' priorities.

From 1987 until 1999, Mr. Yohnka served on the staff of the American Bar Association, spending most of that time as a Special Presidential Assistant in the ABA's Office of the President.

Jan Dorner is the Voter Services Co-Chair of the League of Women Voters of Illinois and the outgoing State League President.

Jan was elected State League President in 2011 after a long career of voter service in the League organizing voter registration drives and candidate debates. At the state level, the League took on campaign finance reform, gun ownership, and state partisan politics under Jan's leadership. In 2011 Jan provided testimony to the Illinois Campaign Finance Task Force, urging reform to ensure the public's right to know the source of campaign funding, combat corruption and deter undue influence, and make competing for public office more equitable. The League also filed a lawsuit that year challenging the recently completed redistricting, which allowed Democrats to maintain control of the Illinois General Assembly and win more seats for Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives. The suit asked that future maps be drawn

without consideration of constituents' voting history. At a time of record gun violence, the League also took up the issue of gun ownership under Dorner's leadership. The LWV, a coalition partner of the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence, pressured legislators to restrict access to automatic and semi-automatic assault type weapons. Two years ago, the 94th General Assembly passed Senate Bill 1333, a bill that requires background checks for transfer or sales conducted at gun shows. Because of that law, the Illinois State Police estimate that hundreds of prohibited transfers are prevented each year.