

Key Points to Remember When Building Your League

These tips come from research done for the League and can help us build grassroots membership. (*The full reports can be found on our website: www.LWV.org, Members section, under*).

One key piece from all research indicates that THE most important way to build membership at the local level is to have **League members actively ASK others to join.** Over half of current LWV members indicate they joined because someone they knew ASKED them to join)

2000 Report on LWV Membership Recruitment

Research conducted by Kelly Kleiman for the LWV of Illinois - 2000

- Recruiting new Members = Fulfilling the LWV mission
- Membership recruitment is Top Priority for your League
- Hire a Membership Coordinator – who is a recruiter and helps others
- Set a 2-3 month membership drive with ambitious goals, evaluate progress during the drive
- The drives allows you to bring in a GROUP of new people together & builds their comfort
- Membership is the work of the WHOLE team (not just President or Membership Chair)
- Watch for and break down those “club” like ways – that intimidate or limit people from joining the activities of the LWV (e.g. meet at a public place rather than someone’s home... others)
- Invite non-members into the activities of the LWV

Working Together – Research on Community Engagement/Volunteering

Research Conducted by Lake, Snell, Perry and the Tarrance Group for the LWWUS - 1999

- Create Flexible (time, place, responsibilities), bit sized, guilt-free opportunities for people to become involved in the LWV
- People are busy, have many options to spend their time – make sure to create impactful opportunities – how what they’re doing ties into the bigger picture of community change.
- Two groups will become involved – Very busy people (because they like to be involved) and people who have NEVER been asked. So don’t make assumptions ... Just ask them!
- People want be most active where they can make an impact – that is at Community Level (League is at local community level)
- Create opportunities that are two-for-one, invite families (children get to learn about civic engagement, busy parents still spend time with family, they have a positive impact on a community issue)

Identifying Issues and Activities to Build the LWV - Diversity Tool Kit

Research conducted by Heather Bethrud and Bob Greene in 1997

- Work on the hottest community issues – “Issues with Legs”
- ID diverse partners to work with and build coalitions with
- Practice “Active Listening”
- Assess, Plan, Act, Assess
- People will join a group that....
 - Make a difference on issues community members consider vitally important;
 - Provide flexibility, including many different ways to get involved;
 - Encourage networking and building contacts in the community;
 - Allow members to learn new skills that will be useful for becoming community leaders or in advancing one's career;
 - Offer opportunities for having fun and building relationships;
 - Respect individual contributions, skills, experiences, working styles and available time.