

# THE VOTER

League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County  
[www.lwvstanislaus.org](http://www.lwvstanislaus.org)



## 2025-2026 Board of Directors

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*Vice President*  
Angelina Ceja

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*Treasurer*  
Ellen Meyer

*State Action - Water*  
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*Finance Drive*  
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*Voter Service*  
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Stella Berattis

*Nominating Chair*  
Vivian Lopez

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**by Amy Wolfe**  
LWVSC President

Dear LWVSC Members and Friends,

The Season of Giving is upon us and it is my favorite time of year! I love that our community comes together in the spirit of supporting one another. As an all-volunteer organization, the League is in need of your seasonal support. Our annual Finance Drive is our only mechanism to generate operating and voter service revenue.

As my solicitation letter on page 5 shares, your contributions enable us to continue our decades-long service focused on civic engagement, voter participation, and community outreach. I ask that you consider a donation today and deeply appreciate your assistance.

Our engagement and outreach efforts are expanding in the new year with our first-ever LWVSC Book Club! I extend my sincere thanks to Denise Nordell for suggesting and now spearheading this effort. The Book Club will be an opportunity for thoughtful dialogue and exploration of civic ideas. Details can be found on page 9 and I personally recommend the audiobook of our first selection, read by the author.

I am also looking forward to this year's Holiday Fling taking place on December 10, 2025 at the AgSafe Building. My officemate and fellow Modesto Rotarian Daren Williams will be sharing his father's unparalleled collection of artwork centered on the Holodomor. This gruesome chapter in world history focuses on the genocide of Ukrainians from 1932-1933 by Stalin's government. This will be a deeply moving and impactful discussion of these world events as told through dozens of pieces of propagandist art. It is an event not to be missed! Details are on page 8, including how to RSVP.

As always, I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of our Board of Directors. This tireless group of women are the engine behind the LWVSC and in this time of thanks, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to each of them.

With appreciation,

Amy

# *LWVSC Board Meeting Highlights*

## *November 2025*

The LWVSC Board of Directors met on November 12, 2025, to conduct its regular business. Highlights are below.

- The Treasurer will be transitioning to Quickbooks beginning in 2026.
- Our Special Election Voter Service efforts were well-received including our Proposition 50 information webinar.
- LWV California has new co-presidents, Kandeia Mosley Gandhi and Lorrel Plimier.
- The new LWVSC book club will begin in January by reading *Her Honor*, by LaDorris Hazard Cordell. See flyer on page 9.

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## *League of Women Voters of California*

### *Water Committee Update - Data Centers*

#### **Data Centers' Water and Electricity Use**

##### **Submitted by Seena Rhine**

The rapid increase of data centers in the US is putting huge pressure on water and electricity usage. Recent research by Cornell University predicts that by the year 2030 the current rate of AI growth would annually put 24 to 44 metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere - equivalent to adding 5 to 10 million cars to our US roadways. It would also drain 731 to 1,125 million cubic meters of water per year - equal to the annual usage of 6-10 million Americans.

With smart planning and conservation measures these figures could be drastically reduced.

A study done in April, 2025 indicated that there are more than 4,000 centers in the US and one-third of them are in just 3 states -Virginia, Texas and California. Santa Clara County alone has 75 of them.

As AI is becoming more prevalent and growing at a rapid rate it is imperative that steps must be taken **NOW** to avoid a bleak future for these irreplaceable resources.

# *LWVSC Meet and Learn Recap*

Marvin Jacobo, Executive Director of the Latino Leadership Initiative (LLI), John Torres, LLI Program Manager-City Ministry Network, and LLI graduate Andrea Carranza, addressed twenty LWVSC members at our November Meet & Learn.

The Latino Leadership Initiative seeks to increase the core competencies of emerging Latino civic servants in the areas of growth, change, collaboration and community engagement. The LLI takes a small cohort through a community capacity program that brings in training from experienced practitioners in subjects like business, non-profit management, financial literacy, board commission and advocacy. LLI received a \$150,000 grant from Oak Valley Community Bank to expand workforce opportunities for Latino youth in Stanislaus and San Joaquin counties. Mr. Jacobo reflected on the history of LWV's work to widen the circle of those participating in democracy and how their work continues this effort in our community. Our community is made up of 48% of individuals from Latino countries, yet only 2% of our boards and commissions reflect this population.

Mr. Torres explained that the program recruits individuals who have a heart for this community and a call to help and serve in all areas. He oversees the selection process and the training that includes a screening called Strength Finder which applicants take to discover their own strengths, which they often take for granted. Additionally, participants leave the program with the development of an action plan for civic engagement and a mentor.

Ms. Andrea Carranza, an enthusiastic and engaging recent graduate, shared her experience in the program and her hopes for her future engagement in our community. Andrea shared how the Latino Leadership Initiative not only offered her tangible education and training, but as importantly, brought her together with others like her with a deep sense of community. When she moved to Modesto after college, while she had family here, she didn't have a true sense of belonging. LLI gave her that, along with the confidence to pursue her passion for community building work.

Submitted by Laurie Carley



**NEIGHBORHOOD  
HERO  
AWARDS**

Three members of the LWVSC Board of Directors, Marie Bairey, Colleen Preston, and Amy Wolfe, were honored by Supervisor Mani Grehwal as Neighborhood Heroes.

The awards were created to honor individuals in our community who go the extra mile or lend a helping hand. They volunteer their time. They step up to serve when help is needed. They bring out the best in us.

We are thrilled to recognize our Board members for their hard work and dedication to community.



**Marie and George Bairey**

Distribute books, Christmas gifts, and food through their work with North Modesto Kiwanis Club.

*Nominated by Modesto City Councilmember Jeremiah Williams*



**Colleen Preston**

Volunteers with the Farmland Working Group, the League of Women Voters and more.

*Nominated by Modesto Mayor Sue Zwahlen*



**Amy Wolfe**

Volunteers tirelessly for community organizations and is the current President of the League of Women Voters.

*Nominated by Katy Menges*

## **2025 - 2026 Membership Directory**



We're excited to make available the 2025-2026 Membership Directory. This year's directory will be distributed via email, as opposed to being printed and mailed.

With the changes to our membership renewal structure, the digital directory gives us the flexibility of providing two directories during the year. This ensures we provide you the most current membership information.

Expect to see the directory in your inbox in early December!

# 2025-2026 LWCSC Finance Drive

Dear League Members and Friends,

When I embarked on my journey as President of the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County (LWVSC), I did so with a passion and enthusiasm for the year ahead. As a stalwart in the community for almost 80-years, our organization has been steadfast in our commitment to non-partisan education, community engagement, and civic participation. We have garnered a well-earned reputation for quality, consistency, dependability, character, and trust.

I would argue now, more than ever, our community needs us for these very traits. It needs our ability to shine a light into all corners, raise awareness around the issues impacting all our citizens, and focus on sharing facts, sources of factual information, and encouraging self-education from these resources.

In October, for example, we hosted a webinar, the Ins and Outs of Proposition 50, focused on helping voters understand exactly what a “yes” and “no” vote meant in the special election. The recording of the webinar was made available on our website, as was a Spanish version, along with printed materials in both languages. Reaching more voters in our community with easy-to-use tools like these to ensure they understand these increasingly complex issues continues to be a cornerstone of the LWVSC.

But we can't do this work without you! Our annual Finance Drive funds our operational and educational efforts. Your donation, no matter the amount, ensures we can continue our array of activities, including election educational efforts like the webinar, our monthly Meet and Learn Luncheon series and the newly launched LWVSC Book Club.

I ask that you consider a donation today in any amount, to either our General Fund (for operational expenses) or the Education Fund (for voter education and outreach expenses) to enable us to continue serving our community as we have for so long.

Thank you for your consideration and ongoing support of the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County!

With deep gratitude,

Amy Wolfe  
2025-26 President

# 2025-2026 LWCSC Finance Drive

## You have two options for your donation

1. To **DONATE ONLINE**: Go to [lwvstanislaus.org](http://lwvstanislaus.org) and click the red Donate button.
2. To **DONATE by MAIL**: Mail your donation to LWVSC, P.O. Box E, Modesto, CA 95352.

## You have two donation categories

1. **The General Fund:**
  - Our General Fund supports everything we do, but because of IRS rules, donations to this fund are **NOT** tax deductible.
2. **The Education Fund (Local Impact Fund):**
  - Nonpartisan voter information and activities including Candidate Forums and Ballot measure Pros/Cons, Voter Guides, and “Your Elected Official” contact lists
  - Building citizen participation in the democratic process including voter registration event and youth outreach

If tax deductibility of your donation is important for you, consider donating through the mechanism of the Education Fund, administered for us by the California State League of Women Voters. The Education Fund is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public policy educational organization used to conduct voter service and citizen education activities. By IRS rules, donations to this fund can **only** be used for above mentioned activities.

*Donations to our LWVSC Education Fund are received and managed by the **League of Women Voters of California Education Fund (LWVCEF)**, a 501(c) 3 corporation and are fully tax-deductible where allowed by law.*

### **Please Note:**

If you donate to **both funds**, *(thanks!)*

Please write/enclose **2 SEPARATE CHECKS:**

~ One for the **Education Fund**

made out to: "**LWVCEF**" *(or "League of Women Voters of California Education Fund")*

Memo: LWVSC *(or "League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County")*

**PLUS**

~Another for the **General Fund**

made out to: "**LWVSC**" *(or "LWV of Stanislaus County")*

### ***Why separate checks?***

*By IRS requirements, we now must keep General Fund donations totally separate from Education Fund donations. Thank you for helping us to comply!*

# Renew Your LWVSC Membership on ChapterSpot

## WHAT?

ChapterSpot is the new League online membership system that provides a centralized website where anyone can join or renew their membership, regardless of which League they are joining. Dues amounts and membership categories have changed.

## WHY?

LWV changed dues structure for all local Leagues to increase and diversify overall membership and LWV's ability to fulfill our mission. Funding at the state and local levels will increase. By adopting technology that streamlines membership, your League leaders will be able to focus on more substantive work.

## HOW?

Earlier this year, you should have received an email asking you to log in for the first time to "claim your membership." If you didn't receive an email, check your spam folder. Or contact us at [lwvstanislaus@gmail.com](mailto:lwvstanislaus@gmail.com) or (209) 324-3375.

If you have not registered online on the LWV Member Portal, do it now!

<https://portal.lwv.org/>

## WHEN?

Log in to register yourself ASAP and be prepared to pay your dues on your annual renewal date. Credit card is the preferred method of payment. See other option below.

## MORE INFO

Visit our website for more details:

<https://my.lwv.org/california/stanislaus-county/membership-changes-2025-chapterspot>

## Can I still pay by check?

This is not the preferred method - it requires more time and effort from your League treasurer, plus, more time for funds to transfer. If you do, write your check to LWVUS with the note "renewal/membership" and send to our treasurer at LWVSC, PO Box E, Modesto, CA 95352.

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup>  
OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

# Holiday Fling

DECEMBER

10

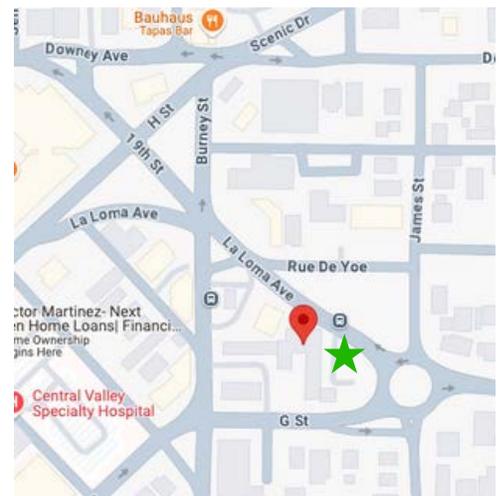
AT 6 PM

AgSafe

1935 G Street, Modesto

Secure parking entrance on La Loma  
Avenue (green star)

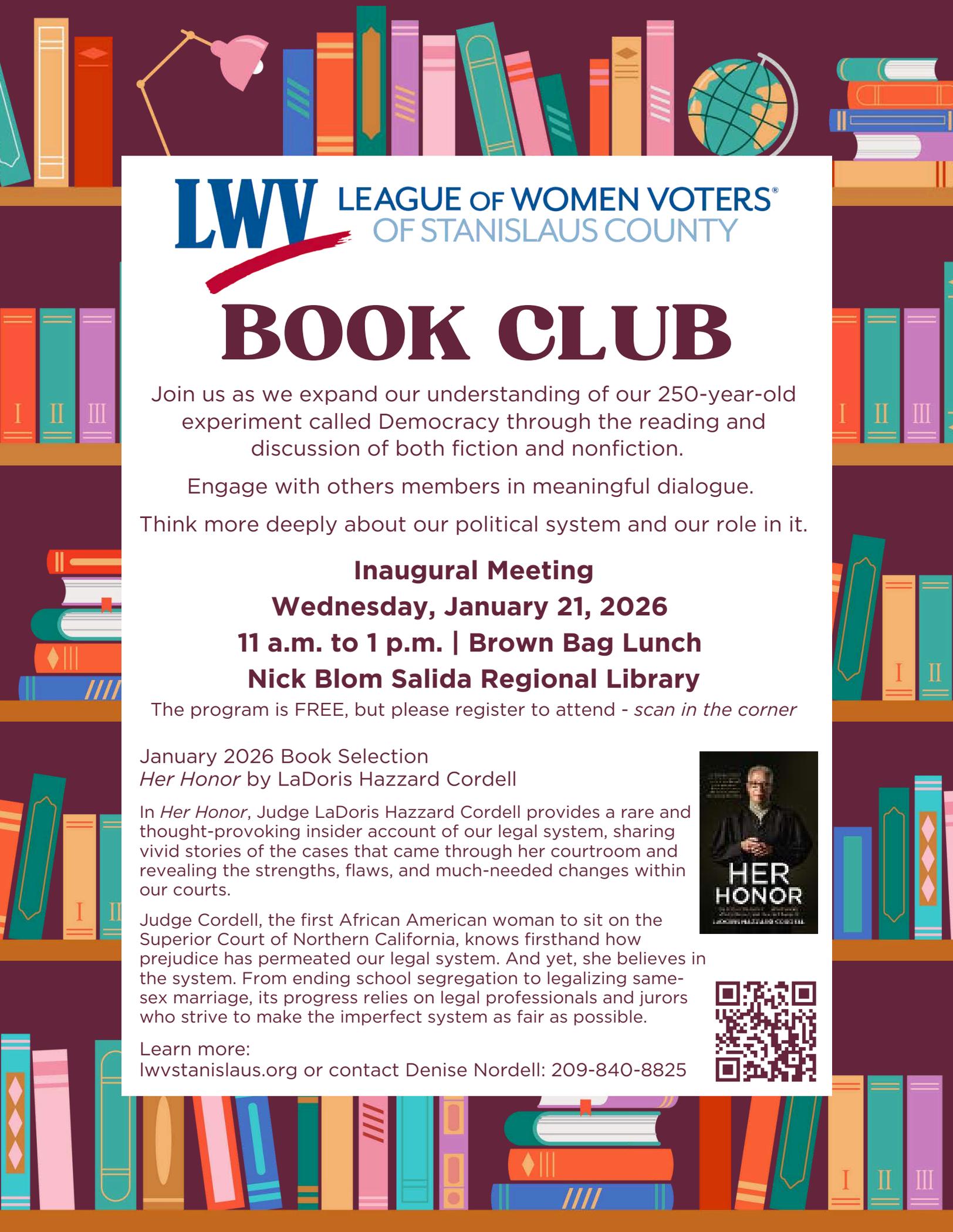
RSVP by 12/8/25 to Angelina Ceja at  
[angelina@agsafe.org](mailto:angelina@agsafe.org)



## **Holodomor 1932-33: Through the Eyes of Ukrainian Artists**

*Speaker: Daren Williams*

In 1932-33, ten years before Hitler came to power, Josef Stalin's Soviet regime starved between 3.5 and 7 million Ukrainians to death in the first genocide. The Holodomor (literally "death inflicted by starvation") was a man-made famine engineered by the Soviet government. Daren Williams' father, Morgan Williams, heard stories of the Holodomor during his first visit to the former Soviet Republic in the early 1990. He then began collecting and commissioning artworks related to the Holodomor, amassing the world's largest collection of Holodomor-related art. Following his death in June of last year, Daren's family donated the entire collection to the Holodomor Museum in Kiev, Ukraine, where it will be on permanent display after the war. Daren will share the story and images from his father's collection, "Holodomor 1932-33: Through the Eyes of Ukrainian Artists."



**LWW** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

# BOOK CLUB

Join us as we expand our understanding of our 250-year-old experiment called Democracy through the reading and discussion of both fiction and nonfiction.

Engage with others members in meaningful dialogue.  
Think more deeply about our political system and our role in it.

**Inaugural Meeting**  
**Wednesday, January 21, 2026**  
**11 a.m. to 1 p.m. | Brown Bag Lunch**  
**Nick Blom Salida Regional Library**

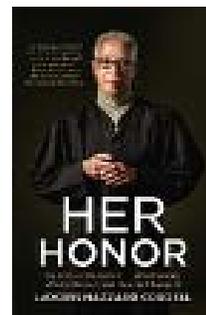
The program is FREE, but please register to attend - *scan in the corner*

January 2026 Book Selection  
*Her Honor* by LaDoris Hazzard Cordell

In *Her Honor*, Judge LaDoris Hazzard Cordell provides a rare and thought-provoking insider account of our legal system, sharing vivid stories of the cases that came through her courtroom and revealing the strengths, flaws, and much-needed changes within our courts.

Judge Cordell, the first African American woman to sit on the Superior Court of Northern California, knows firsthand how prejudice has permeated our legal system. And yet, she believes in the system. From ending school segregation to legalizing same-sex marriage, its progress relies on legal professionals and jurors who strive to make the imperfect system as fair as possible.

Learn more:  
[lwvstanislaus.org](http://lwvstanislaus.org) or contact Denise Nordell: 209-840-8825





# MEET & LEARN

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**January 22, 2026**

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

*Gather, 2424 McHenry Avenue, Modesto*

**Randy Fiorini**

**Farmer and Water Expert**

Join us as our speaker discusses the top 5 most pressing water issues in California.

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Cost: \$30 per person

**Register online at [www.lwvstanislaus.org](http://www.lwvstanislaus.org) or scan:**

*Advanced registrations online required.*

*Deadline is January 19, 2026.*



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## **Upcoming Meet & Learn Luncheons**

February 19, 2026: Amanda Hughes, Stanislaus 2030  
Childcare Expansion

March 19, 2026: Jessica Filbrun, Esq., Stanislaus Equity Partners (STEP)  
Stories from a Community Development Corporation

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## **Thank you to our Meet & Learn Sponsors**



***Kay and Mike Christensen***

***Anonymous Marie Bairey Kenni and Lou Friedman Theresa Kiehn Angelina Ceja***