



BULLETIN, June, 2023

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

Attendees at the Lexington League Annual Meeting on June 1 enjoyed an excellent presentation from Nicco Mele and Lauren Feeney of the Lexington Observer, the Town's local online newspaper. Inspired by their account of the inception of the Observer, and it's first months of operation, the local League is discussing ways in which we can support this effort beyond financial donations.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Lexington League is now on hiatus for the summer and will resume activities in September.

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS

### LWVMA EVENTS

#### ZOOM REGISTRATION STILL OPEN FOR THE JUNE 10 LWVMA 2023 CONVENTION

To register for the 2023 LWVMA Convention - taking place on Saturday, June 10, in Worcester and on Zoom - go to <https://lwmma.org/convention-2023-better-together-making-democracy-work-for-everyone/> . Below are schedule details for Zoom attendees:

9:30 to 9:45	Welcome to Worcester!, LWV Worcester Area President Linda Yates
9:45 to 10:15	Plenary Session 1
10:25 to 11:40	State of the State League; Local League Panel on Building an Inclusive Electorate
11:45 to 12:30	Break for lunch
12:35 to 1:30	Keynote Speaker: Danielle Allen, professor of public policy, politics, and ethics at Harvard University.
1:30 to 2:30	Facilitated breakout sessions for small group discussion
2:30 to 4:00	Plenary Session 2

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER PROFESSOR DANIELLE ALLEN WILL DISCUSS HOW TO “RENOVATE OUR DEMOCRACY”

Dr. Allen is a professor of public policy, politics, and ethics at Harvard University, Director of the Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Ethics, and James Bryant Conant University Professor, one of Harvard’s highest honors.



Building on the challenges she encountered running for Governor of Massachusetts in 2022, Professor Allen has founded **Partners In Democracy** to “renovate our democracy,” with a particular focus on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) residents of our state. .

She points out our state is:

- 37th in the country for the gap between BIPOC population and BIPOC legislative representation
- 41st in the country for monetary competitiveness for candidates

- 48th in the country for the gap between white and BIPOC turnout
- 50th in the country for state legislature effectiveness
- 50th in the country for competitiveness of elections
- 50th in the country for African-American voter registration.

She will share with the League some reasons for those Massachusetts issues, including the lack of legislative transparency and the decrease in local news sources—and some proposed actions to address them.

### [Next DEI Peer Group Discussion, June 24](#)

The next LWVMA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Peer Group Discussion is scheduled for Saturday, June 24, from 10:00 to 11:30 am on Zoom. The conversation will start from an article by Jennifer Miller in the New York Times, entitled, “Why Some Companies are Saying ‘Diversity and Belonging’ Instead of ‘Diversity and Inclusion’.” Registrants will receive a copy of the article by email prior to the meeting. Register at:

<https://lwmva.org/next-dei-peer-group-discussion-saturday-june-24-10-1130-am-on-zoom/>

### [Annual League Leader Event, Saturday, September 30](#)

The LWVMA’s annual League Leader gathering is scheduled for September 30, 2023. A decision on whether to hold the event on Zoom, as has been done for the last three years, or to return to the popular in-person luncheon has not yet been made. The LWVMA would welcome feedback on members’ preferences.

## [LWVMA ADVOCACY](#)

The League of Women Voters has a long history of supporting domestic violence-related legislation. Currently the LWVMA is actively supporting these three bills:

**H1547/S1077 An Act improving protections relative to domestic violence** updates the definition of domestic violence to include Coercive Control: psychological, emotional, financial, and technological abuse.

**H.1399/S.1079 An Act relative to controlling and abusive litigation** restricts the use of the legal system by abusers to harass or threaten victims of domestic violence by taking them to court repeatedly to drain their resources and make them lose their jobs, homes, savings and sometimes their children, by giving judges tools to limit abusive litigation.

**H1491/S1138 An Act to improve the administration of justice in probate and family court** adds 8 judges to the family court system.

Please contact your legislators to encourage them to co-sponsor these bills. Contact information is at the end of the Bulletin. Submit questions to the LWVMA legislative specialists at [specialists@lwwma.org](mailto:specialists@lwwma.org).

### **New LWVMA Intern Miyabi Madowaki**



LWVMA welcomes a new intern, Miyabi Madowaki for the summer. She was born and raised in California until her family relocated to Tokyo, Japan. Now a sophomore at Wellesley College, studying political science and international relations, she has been passionate about civic engagement from a young age and hopes to contribute to LWVMA's mission through her internship.

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES

## LWVUS MANAGEMENT

The LWVUS has published its updated Rights & Responsibilities Policies, which have been established for local, state, and national levels.

The rights of League members at all levels include the right to participate in League programs, events, campaigns, and other activities; to seek and to fill leadership positions within the League; and to participate in electing League leaders at the local, state and national levels.

The summary of Member Responsibilities states, in part:

To promote the success of LWV and help ensure a safe environment for collaboration, all members must:

- 1. Abide by the applicable rules of LWVUS and their state and local Leagues as set out in each League's bylaws and official policies.*
- 2. Abide by the applicable nonpartisan policies when acting on behalf of LWV. LWV members are free to participate in partisan politics on their own, including campaigns and being a candidate themselves, but they must not identify themselves as a LWV member or use any League's nonpublic resources when doing so.*
- 3. Abide by the applicable diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies.*
- 4. Engage in behavior that promotes respectful discourse and refrain from physically or verbally abusive behaviors toward any LWV member, employee of any League, or members of the public when participating in LWV activities. This specifically includes online activity.*
- 5. Commit LWV to action only when authorized to do so by their state or local League or LWVUS.*
- 6. Not act in opposition to a League position or policy when authorized to act on behalf of LWV or when identifying themselves as LWV members. Members are*

*not required to agree with all LWV positions and may choose to not participate in activities that promote positions they oppose.*

*7. Not make statements on behalf of LWV or purport to represent LWV through any public medium, including online media, unless specifically authorized to do so by their state or local League or LWVUS.*

The full policy can be found in the League Management section of the national League Website: [lww.org](http://lww.org).

## LWVUS VOTER SERVICE

### VOTE411 FIELD TRAINING

Ahead of the 2024 national election, LWVUS will be offering trainings on all things VOTE411 to help Leagues empower and educate voters in their communities. Trainings will begin in August, 2023.

**August 9, 2023, 6 pm ET - VOTE41 + League in Action:** Tools for Election Season. These are powerful digital tools that are most effective when used together to strengthen voter and community outreach in 2024 and beyond.

**September 13, 2023, 6 pm ET - Engaging Volunteers for VOTE411:** The VOTE411 and the Digital Organizing Team will share resources and tips for engaging volunteers to promote the local VOTE411 voter guide.

**November 15, 2023, 6 pm ET - VOTE411 Branding and Promotions:** The VOTE411 Team and the LWVUS Communications Team will share resources available for promoting local VOTE411 voter guides.

**December 13, 2023, 6 pm ET - Getting More Candidates to Respond:**

Seven ways to get more candidate responses to your voter guide, making it more comprehensive and useful to voters.

## LWVUS ADVOCACY

### NATIONAL VOTING RIGHTS ACT

In May, the League of Women Voters of the United States joined others in observing the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Voting Rights Act. LWVUS CEO Virginia Kase Solomón released the following statement:

*Thirty years ago, the League was instrumental in the passage of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), leading a grassroots campaign that engaged a coalition of groups who got the law passed. For 30 years, the League has been a chief enforcer of the law through legal advocacy, which has paved the way for states to increase voter access through automatic voter registration, online voter registration, and same-day registration. \* \* \* Passed with bipartisan support in 1993, the NVRA transformed voter registration, making it easier for people to register to vote and protecting voters from being purged from the voter rolls. \* \* \**

*While we've made advancements in expanding voter access, some 30 years later, the fight for voting rights is far from over. Many people still face disproportionate challenges to participate in elections due to factors including health, age, race, and gender. And without federal legislation to protect voting rights, certain communities continue to lack full representation in our democracy. We call on our elected leaders to make voting rights a priority once and for all.*

*"Our democracy is strongest when every voice is heard. Until every eligible voter has equal access to the ballot, the fight for voting rights must go on.*

## **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA POLICING AND JUSTICE REFORM**

The League of Women Voters of the United States has joined a sign-on letter to the U.S. Senate urging Senators to oppose a resolution disapproving of the D.C. Council's passage of policing and justice reform legislation. The letter noted the way in which D.C. disapproval resolutions contradict D.C. statehood, and that this one in particular undermines police and criminal reform efforts.

## **CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR THE ERA**

At the end of April, the U.S. Senate voted on a resolution to affirm the validity of the Equal Rights Amendment which has now been approved by states. The resolution fell short of the 60-vote threshold to overcome a filibuster. Senator Chuck Schumer (D) filed a motion to reconsider, which will allow him to bring it up again later in this Congress.

Although the League is disappointed with the outcome of this vote, it will continue to advocate for this affirmation of equal rights for all the citizens of the United States. Nearly 75% of Americans support the ERA, and since February, some 15,000 participants have joined with the League in urging Congress to support its final passage

All members of the LWV are urged to contact their representatives in Congress, if they have not already done so, to affirm our support for the ERA. (See contact information at the end of the Bulletin.)





## SAVE THE DATE

June 10, 2023	LWVMA Convention, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm Clark University, Worcester MA and Zoom
June 23-25, 2023	LWVUS National Council Palms Casino Resort, Las Vegas, NV and Zoom
June 24, 2023	DEI Peer Discussion Group 10-11:30 am Zoom
August 9, 2023	VOTE411 Training 6:00 pm Zoom
September 13, 2023	VOTE411 Training 6:00 pm Zoom
September 30, 2023	League Leader Gathering Lunch or Zoom?
November 15, 2023	VOTE411 Training 6:00 pm Zoom
December 13, 2023	VOTE411 Training 6:00 pm Zoom

### Contact Information for Legislators

U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren	309 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202 244-4543
U.S. Senator Edward Markey	255 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202 224-2742
U.S. Representative Katherine Clark	2448 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515 202 225-2836
MA Senator Michael Barrett	Mike.Barrett@masenate.gov 617 722-1572
MA Senator Cindy Friedman	Cindy.Friedman@masenate.gov 617 722-1432
MA Representative Michelle Ciccolo	Michelle.Ciccolo@mahouse.gov 617 722-2210

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The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization dedicated to the principles of self-government established in the Constitution of the United States. The League works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. For more information, contact Lexington League Convenor, Margaret Coppe at [mecoppe@gmail.com](mailto:mecoppe@gmail.com). All League forums are free and open to the public.

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the September 2023 LWV LEXINGTON Bulletin, please send it to Wendy Manz at [wendy\\_manz@yahoo.com](mailto:wendy_manz@yahoo.com) prior to September 5, 2023.

