

Our Monthly Program / January 11 Impact of Distance Learning During a Pandemic

On January 11, the ABC League of Women Voters will present on the impact of distance learning and the pandemic on student mental health, academic progress, opportunities and challenges. We will hear from a school psychologist, a parent of children with disabilities, a music teacher and a high school student. Each person will discuss the impact of distance learning and social isolation from their experiences.



We hope to share the impacts as we know them today, but recognize that there will be more that we will learn about how the needs of our students and staff evolve as a result of this experience.

6:00 Zoom meeting room opens
6:00 to 6:30—Getting connected and visiting
6:30-Announcements and Program

Zoom Link:

<https://qctv-org.zoom.us/j/81863109852?pwd=S0lycjBaRGVrc3RsMINxbENpVWZ4QT09>

Dial in for phone-only connection: 312 626 6799
Meeting ID: 818 6310 9852
Passcode: 451560

We will have a panel of four speakers:

- Aaron Balzer is a school psychologist from Anoka Hennepin. He will provide a broad perspective on the issues of how the pandemic has impacted the mental well-being of the students.
- Amanda Friedrich is the parent of two children with disabilities. She will share some of the characteristics of Pediatric Autoimmune Psychiatric Disorder and Mast Cell Disorder as both of these disorders are relatively new to school within educational environments.
- Andrea Whitcomb will address the challenges and opportunities she has found in distance teaching and concerns she has regarding student's participation and progress.
- Sebastian Whitcomb is a Junior at Anoka High School. Sebastian will share his experiences with distance learning, opportunities and challenges.

The Electoral College – a First Person Account! and LWV Perspectives on the Electoral College

In December, LWV ABC had a pair of meetings on the Electoral College. In the first, Mel Aanerud shared his research on the history of the Electoral College and experiences as 2020 Elector. This was an excellent and informative discussion, many thanks to Mel for this presentation!



Thank you, media partners: We appreciated the support and interest of media partners on this program. *Thank you to QCTV* for recording the program and making a link available to us, for including it in their weekly programming, and posting the link to their website. **Thank you to Jonathan Young at ABC Newspapers** for attending and publishing an article on the Electoral College in their December 25 issue, **and to Danicka Peterson, News Director at North Metro TV** for being in attendance

The second meeting focused on why the Electoral College should be abolished. Rosemary Heilemann from LWV Deerfield Area (Illinois) gave the presentation that the LWV Illinois Electoral College Committee has prepared. This presentation debunked many of the misconceptions about why the Electoral College is necessary. Because this was a discussion of LWV positions, we kept the discussion to members only but the video is open for all to view.



We really appreciate Rosemary taking time for this thought-provoking presentation. For more information on the LWV's positions on the Electoral College check out the [LWV positions on the EC at the end of this blog post](#) and read [this article from the Star Tribune](#).

The Electoral College is something that we mostly think about for six months or so every four years. Watch the videos, review the LWV positions, and learn about this archaic and undemocratic institution. Maybe it's time to think about it more, and maybe move toward doing something about it.

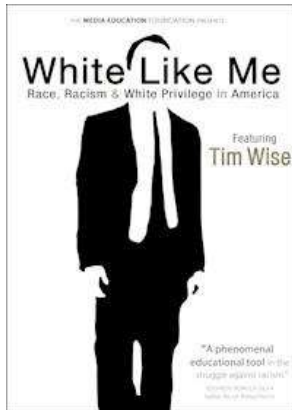
Video of both presentations is available on the [LWV ABC "Spotlight on Issues" page](#) and the [LWV ABC YouTube Channel](#). Both are well worth a watch!

Book and Film Discussions via Zoom – with LWV ABC

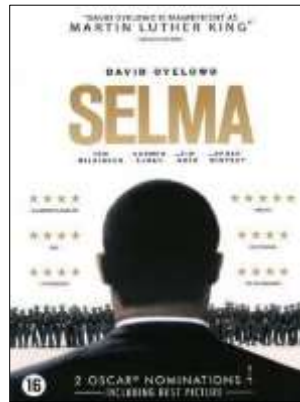
Expand your knowledge and participate in interesting discussions!

The LWV ABC Book and Film Clubs focus on diversity. The selections are meant to help us gain perspectives and learn about race and equity. Join us for these discussions!

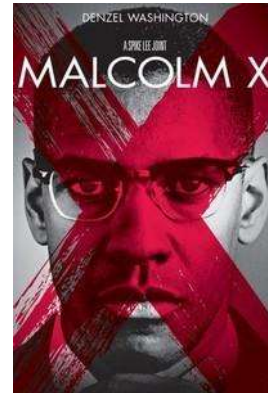
Our Film Club meets monthly via Zoom *on the first Wednesday of the month*. Our informal discussions focus on issues raised by the film, but even if you did not have time to see the film, everyone can participate in the conversation. It's a great opportunity for some social interaction! Both the Anoka County Library and the Columbia Heights Library offer fee movie downloads through Kanopy – a tutorial on how to use Kanopy is on page 8 of this newsletter, thanks to Pat Kennedy. [This page has all the info you need to join the Film Club.](#)



January 6

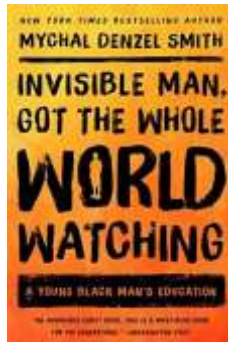


February 3



March 3

Our Book Club: Due to the holidays, our next Book Club Meeting is on January 20 but it is time to get your library requests in for the upcoming books. The LWV ABC Book Club is intended to foster conversation about social justice issues. Our informal discussions (via Zoom) are centered around issues raised by the book, but it is not necessary to finish or even read the book to be able to participate in the discussion. The Book Club will generally be held on the 3rd Wednesday, at least every other month, monthly when people volunteer to choose a book and lead a discussion. [Click here for the Book Club page.](#)





HOME ABOUT WHAT WE DO WHERE WE STAND FOR VOTERS NEWS & EVENTS CONTACT

JOIN/RENEW

GIVE

VOLUNTEER

POLICING ISSUES — REFORM, DISMANTLE, DEFUND?

LWV Minneapolis began a discussion on policing in September, producing an excellent series of presentations on policing that wrapped up on December 23. We have shared the [Minneapolis Policing presentations](#) on the LWV ABC website.

On January 5, LWV Minneapolis is hosting a Civic Buzz event on their Facebook page – you will find a link on the [LWV ABC Calendar for January 5](#). We will also link to a recording for this event on our website when it's done.

This is an essential discussion, well thought-out and moderated by League members and community leaders in Minneapolis. Take time to watch these videos and join in the discussion. The story of policing in Minneapolis is of national interest; this excellent series will provide much-needed depth and balance on the issues!



Follow City Government Meetings:

Click this link - "[Your Elected Officials](#)" and you will find extensive resources on elected officials throughout Anoka County. Pat Kennedy has worked to include here links to city webpages and social media connections. Links include where to watch city meetings online, and their social media sites.

It's interesting to watch your city council in action. LWV ABC members are invited to watch their city council meeting and then complete an LWV Observer Report form – available at <https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/action-and-advocacy/observer-corp>

So... what shall we do while we wait for the vaccine?

Oh, my. It's been months since we've met in person, since we've been masking and staying home and being virtual for the things that we'd really rather do in person. And the end, while in sight, may still be some time out. What will you do this winter, while we wait for the vaccine?

Here is a piece of needed and meaningful work that can be done from home – surveying the “top cop” in your city to support the LWV MN Firearms Study Update.

LWV MN Firearms Study Update – Interview your “Top Cop” for LWV

This study update was authorized in 2019 at the LWVMN Convention. The study's purpose is to update the [LWV MN Firearms study](#) from 1990. The study update is expected to come out around September 2021. **Local Leagues like LWV ABC are asked to interview their local police chiefs and sheriffs in the month of January, reporting data to the study committee. The interviews will provide the committee a broad view of the possible impacts of proposed firearms legislation.**

The 'top cops' who participate in the interviews give the study committee great insight on the pros and cons of firearms safety issues. Through this work, League is engaging in our communities and through police interviews are learning what's going on in their community, and whether firearms are an issue or not.

The help being requested is for members throughout our service area to contact the police chief or sheriff who serves their city, interview them using the 20 questions provided by the study committee, and then relay written notes from the discussion to the study committee. The total project would be 1-1.5 hour commitment; scripts are provided for making initial contact and setting up the interview as well as the twenty questions for the interview. It would be wonderful if we had two volunteers from each of our jurisdictions.



In the LWV ABC service area, we have police departments in Anoka, Blaine, Champlin, Columbia Heights, Coon Rapids, Fridley, Spring Lake Park and Ramsey. The Anoka County Sheriff serves the rest of the communities in which our members live. We have members in all these except Spring Lake Park.

Ideally, we will have a team of two interviewers for each police department. LWV ABC will provide a Zoom meeting space and or conference call capabilities for the meeting. Written results from the interview are to be sent to the Study Committee by Jan 31 or soon after. Please contact LWV ABC at lwvabc@gmail.com to get started on this project.

News from CMAL – Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues – Meeting Jan 9



What: Panel Discussion on Metro Area County Government

All LWV members are invited to hear panelists and ask questions.

When: Saturday, January 9, 2021 10-11:30 am on Zoom

Who: **Jan Callison** – Former Hennepin County Commissioner

Matt Smith – Dakota County Administrator

Lisa Weik – Washington County Commissioner

Topics:

- What's working well in county government – and what's not
- Effects of pandemic on county operations – both temporary and permanent
- Working relationship between counties and Met Council – Transparent? Accountable? Engaged?
- Working relationship between counties and their residents – Transparent? Accountable? Engaged?

RSVP: kate.redden@yahoo.com

Where: Zoom Call

Topic: CMAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Time: Jan 9, 2021 10:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting – Click link below

<https://zoom.us/j/93758148664?pwd=YVBtSWFpVi9JbGh4a2c0dHROeEhwdz09>

OR For Phone Dial in: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 937 5814 8664 Passcode: 975443

Highlights of LWV ABC Board Meeting minutes, December 28, 2020

We discussed the issue of updating League's position on Firearms safety. We would interview officers in some of our member's cities, and also interview someone in the Anoka County Sheriff's office, giving them a questionnaire that would be provided to us. This might be a good volunteer project for some of our new members. Contact our President, Gretchen Sabel, about it at lwvabc@gmail.com.

Some Board members have been working on updating our LWV ABC Member Handbook and Bylaws. The state League has a new template for our bylaws. We need to clarify a lot of the language about the Board, including questions such as: Who is on the Board?, What is a quorum of the Board? How much of the Board should be appointed versus elected? Some of the language is confusing on these points. We decided to have a separate meeting just to discuss this issue.

The Diversity Committee urges members to think about joining the discussion at the Book Club and Film Club meetings. You do not have to read the book or seen the film in order to participate. Members can watch the films on Kanopy with an Anoka County library card.

Arlene Gillett, Secretary

LWV Minnesota Convention 2011

The LWVMN Board is pleased to announce that the 2021 Convention is being planned as a virtual convention and will be held the weekend of June 11-13. It is hoped that the virtual format will allow for broader participation and give the potential for a slate of great speakers. We will be recruiting a Convention Task Force so please contact Michelle or Laura if you are interested in serving. LWV ABC members can also email us at lwvabc@gmail.com and we'll help get you connected.

How to use Kanopy to view movies online

Kanopy

Kanopy is an online video streaming service for libraries and universities. Everyone with an Anoka County Library card or a Columbia Heights Library card can watch a wide variety of films and documentaries for free from the comfort of their home. Each library patron can watch up to 10 videos per month. Closed Captioning is available. Hennepin County Library is not currently subscribed to this service.

Kanopy is available on your laptop or computer on the Kanopy website, or on a tablet or phone through the Kanopy App, or on a TV with the Kanopy App on a smart TV or through a TV streaming device (AppleTV, Roku, Chromecast, AndroidTV, FireTV, Samsung).

Create your Kanopy Account

You will need

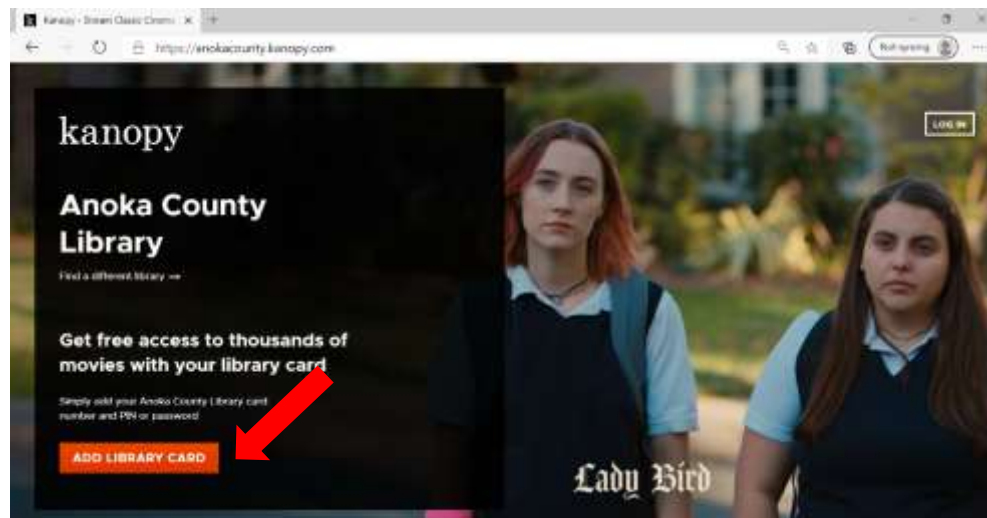
- Your Anoka County Library Card number
- Your Email address

Go to [Anoka County Library Kanopy Website](https://anokacounty.kanopy.com/)

(<https://anokacounty.kanopy.com/>)

Click on “Add Library Card” (Returning users with a Kanopy account just need to click on Log In)

Click “Log In” if you already have an account.



Add your Library Card Number and your Library Card Pin Number
Click Continue

STEP 2 OF 4

Add Your Library Card

LIBRARY CARD NUMBER:

LIBRARY CARD PASSWORD:

CONTINUE

Need a card? Apply with your library here

Create your Kanopy Account

1. By adding name, email and creating a password and clicking sign up
2. By signing in with Google or Facebook

Option 1 is recommended if you prefer Facebook or Goggle to have less data about you

STEP 1 OF 4

Create Your Account

about 2min | provides the right up-fronted by creating a Kanopy account

Sign Up with Google

Connect with Facebook

First Name

Last Name

Email Address

Password

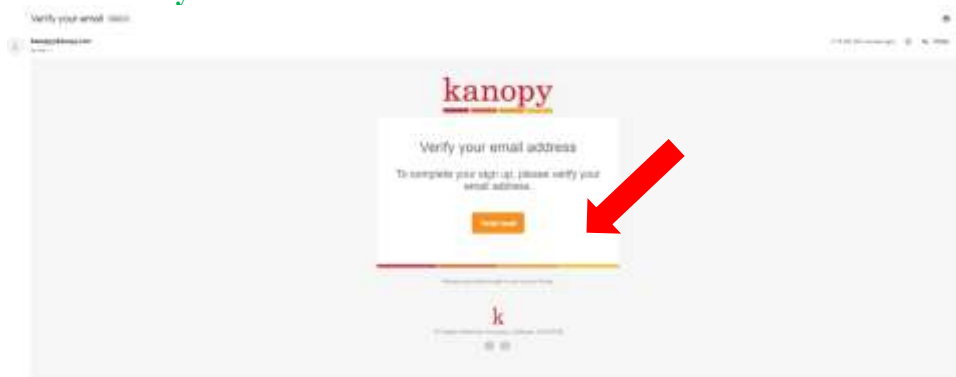
SIGN UP

By signing up you confirm that you're 13 years or older and agree to Kanopy's Terms and Privacy Policy

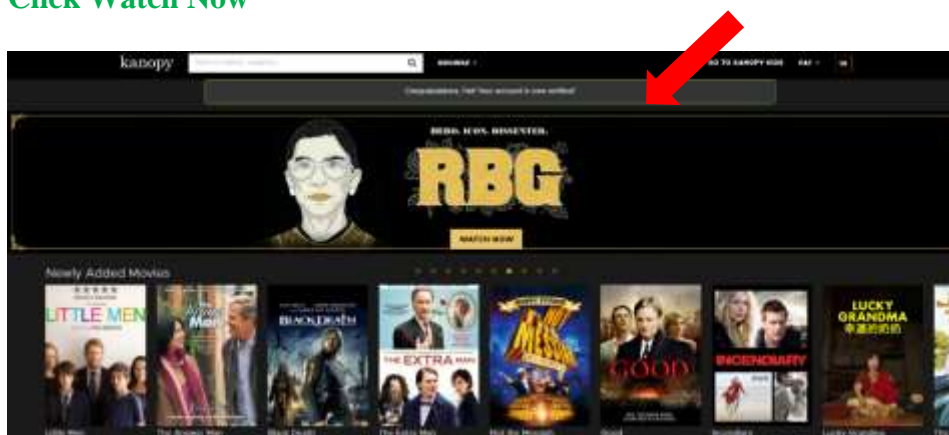
Kanopy Screen will tell you to verify your email



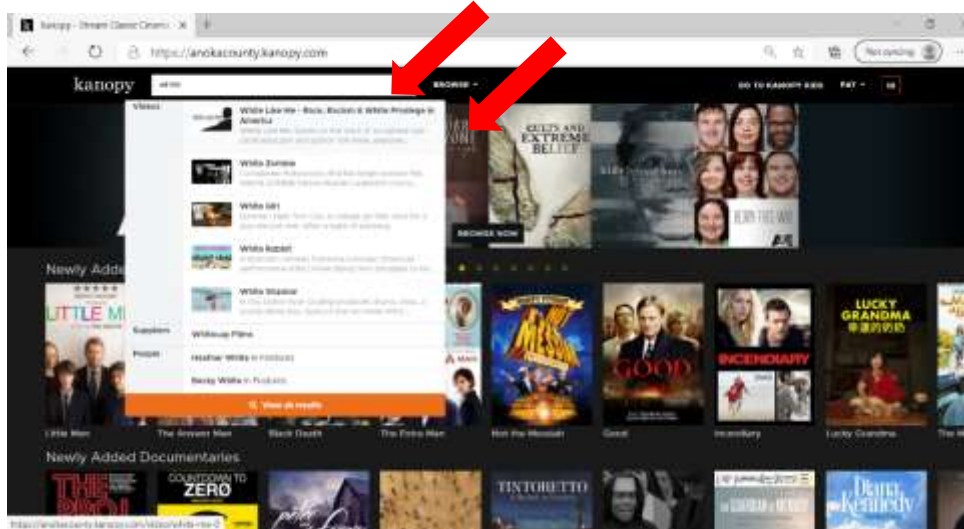
Go to your Email Account and Open the “verify your email” email from Kanopy
Click “Verify Email”



Kanopy confirms that your email is verified.
Click Watch Now

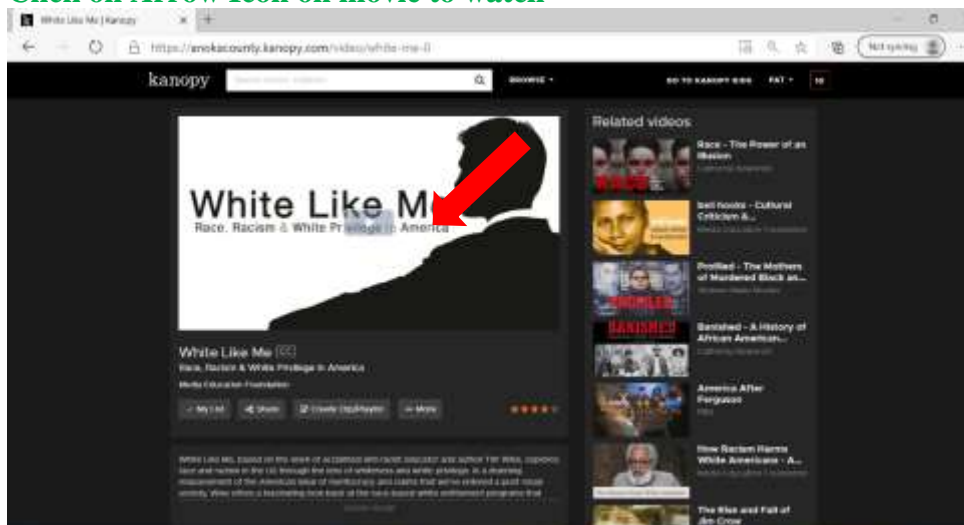


Search For a movie by typing Name in the Kanopy Search Box and Click on the film Name



Number near your name shows how many movies you have left to view this month

Click on Arrow Icon on movie to watch



Kanopy Help

[Add Films to Your Watchlist](#)

[Enable Closed Captioning](#)

[Search for a Film](#)

Enjoy your movie experience!

2021 - 2022 People Powered Fair Maps Strategy

Join us for a presentation and discussion

In response to an excellent suggestion in the last Advocacy and Program for Action Team (APAT) meeting, LWV Minnesota will host two 1 hour Zoom presentations/discussions to discuss the LWV Minnesota 2021 – 2022 PPFM Strategy. These meetings will be held at 7:00 PM on Thursday, December 17, 2020 and 7:00 PM on Thursday, January 7, 2021. This presentation will feature Nick Harper, LWVMN Civic Engagement Director and Paul Huffman, LWVMN Redistricting Coordinator. The information presented will support the objective of enabling local Leagues and individuals to engage in those aspects of redistricting that most interest them, in a manner and with a level of commitment that works for them.

The key areas we will discuss include:

- Estimated timeline for state and local redistricting activities
- Current status and strategy for legislation to address state-wide (congressional and legislative) redistricting;
- Focus on local redistricting efforts, both for local redistricting and to influence; legislators to reflect local interests in state-wide redistricting;
- Tools for mapping and support/training to be available;
- State alliance for redistricting and opportunities to development local partnerships ;
- Opportunities for local Leagues and individual League members (and non-members) to participate in and support the PPFM Campaign.
-

Since this is only an hour we will not be able to go into great detail on any single aspect of the plan for the next 2 years. Due to the importance of local engagement and action, we will schedule meetings in January to discuss local redistricting and communities of interest in greater depth. Please contact me with additional questions or comments at phuffman@lwvmn.org.

Do you have Information to share with LWV ABC?

Four ways to stay in touch with LWV ABC

Visit our public website: www.lwvabcmn.org. If you need a refresher on accessing the Members Only section of the website, send an email to lwvabc@gmail.com. We will reply with the link for you to bookmark.

We're on Facebook: Just search for "LWV ABC Facebook".

Our monthly newsletter, *The Voter*: Members and other interested persons receive our newsletter by email in the early part of each month. Issues are also available on our LWV ABC website, www.lwvabcmn.org.

Selected items from *League Update, December 17 and December 31 from LWV US*

LWVUS joined a letter to the heads of the Senate Appropriations Committee last week on funding for the Election Assistance Commission (EAC). Specifically, the League requested the House pass a \$19 million EAC funding package by the end of year. [Read our letter.](#)

Link to letter is: https://www.lwv.org/league-petitions-senate-election-assistance-appropriations?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=121720

League Affirms Support for the For the People Act in 117th Congress

LWVUS sent a letter to Senate and House leadership outlining our continued support for the legislation commonly referred to as HR1 or the For the People Act. This transformational democracy reform package will help return power to everyday American families. The League strongly urged Congress to prioritize passage of this pro-voter, anti-corruption legislation in the 117th Congress. Along with the passage of the For the People Act, LWVUS asked Congress to prioritize the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act (H.R.4) and legislation granting statehood to Washington, D.C. (H.R.51). [Read the letter.](#)

Link to letter is https://www.lwv.org/expanding-voter-access/league-affirms-support-people-act-117th-congress?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=121720

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

New Pronoun and Gender Guidance

This [guide is to help anyone learn](#) how to use people's correct pronouns and to foster a more inclusive space at the League. Everyone in the League should engage in learning, educating, and advocating for the inclusive use of pronouns for all. We encourage you to read the guide and discuss this information with your fellow League members. It can be read on the [League Management Site](#).

Link to guide is: https://www.lwv.org/league-management/dei-resources/pronoun-and-gender-guidance?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=121720

Link to League Management Site is: <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/manage-your-league>

January 2021 DEI Webinar

Join us on January 21, at 7pm ET, for a webinar on how our nonpartisan and DEI policies intersect and how to navigate through DEI work with a nonpartisan lens.

Registration information for this and all 2021 webinars is available on the [League Management Site](#).

Link to League Management Site is: <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/manage-your-league>

Impact on Issues 2020-2022 Now Available

The updated version of Impact on Issues is now available [on the League Management Site](#). Impact on Issues is updated every two years following the League's biennial convention, where delegates vote on policy changes and additions. Amazon Kindle and print versions will be available soon!

LWVUS 2021 Congressional Interview Program

The League is releasing our revamped congressional interview program: *Rep the League!* The start of the 117th Congress this January provides League advocates with an extra opportunity to connect with freshman and returning lawmakers. These meetings are essential for setting the tone for this Congress and clarifying League priorities. Read our guidance, find a background on congressional interviews, meeting tips, and information on reporting back to LWVUS on the [League Management Site](#).

Semi-Annual Survey: Sharing Our Successes

As the League prepares to move beyond 2020 and into our second century, we do so with a focus on the future and knowing that it is critical that we effectively tell our social impact story. By demonstrating our impact, we strengthen our brand, position the organization to remain relevant for the next 100 years, and garner additional resources to support our initiatives. Our ability to tell our individual and collective League stories hinges on state and local Leagues collecting and reporting data. Recently, LWVUS launched our [Semi-Annual Survey](#). We are currently analyzing the results of and look forward to sharing results through a national webinar on Thursday February 4, 2021. [Register now!](#) If you have any questions please contact Amilcar Guzman, Ph.D. (Director of Evaluation and Outcomes) at aguzman@lww.org.

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LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

ANOKA, BLAINE, COON RAPIDS AREA

THE VOTER

January 2021

Following this important DEI training, we will host a community dialogue about how to remain non-partisan in hyper-partisan times. You can find more information below, or [register here](#).

[Set Your League's DEI New Year's Resolution](#)

Leagues can enhance their DEI work by making a regular practice of participating in learning and discussion opportunities together. One suggestion for this is to complete the [DEI modules](#) together as a League or select a series of [past webinar recordings](#) to view and discuss.

News of the Week

- Last week, the New York governor signed a law establishing automatic voter registration for the state. LWV of New York advocated hard for the bill's passage. [Read about the new law.](#)
- Following months of LWV litigation in multiple states, post-election analysis is showing that the number of rejected ballots is significantly lower this year. LWVUS chief counsel Celina Stewart explains why in [this piece by USA Today](#).
- Over one million voters have already cast their ballots in Georgia's January 5 Senate runoff elections. But now, bad actors have attempted to challenge tens of thousands of voter registrations. [LWV of Georgia called on Boards of Elections](#) to reject these attempts at voter suppression.

LWV Joins Amicus Protecting Transgender Students in Sports

The League of Women Voters of the United States joined civil rights partners on an amicus brief in the case of *Hecox v. Little*, a lawsuit challenging Idaho's Fairness in Women's Sports Act. The Idaho law currently prohibits transgender students from taking part in female sports, and the harms would be felt by trans students as well as by intersex persons, non-binary persons, and many cisgender women and girls. The League and partners joined this case to be in solidarity with all women and non-binary persons who deserve equal treatment under the law. [Read our statement and amicus here.](#)

In the Know: Hecox v. Little (Blog)

Want to learn more about this lawsuit and why the League of Women Voters joined this case dedicated to ensuring equal rights and equal opportunity for all? Our dedication to creating a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable society means that we must stand up against injustice. Every person deserves the opportunity to participate in sports and gain the significant physical, emotional, and psychological benefits that comes from playing on a team. [Read the blog.](#)

Webinar: How to Effectively Assess Litigation Opportunities

Join us on April 21, at 3pm ET, for an interactive webinar to help take your litigation to the next level! The League's mission to empower voters and defend democracy is often achieved through strategic litigation, particularly when centered around our Making Democracy Work issues. In 2020 alone, Leagues engaged in over 60 lawsuits in state and federal court on topics ranging from climate change to COVID-19's effect on voting rights, most of which we have won. As the League evaluates how we can improve upon our litigation successes, the Advocacy and Litigation department wants to help League leaders determine how to best assess opportunities and position your League litigation for success. [Register here.](#)

LWV Calls on President-elect Biden to Reverse Harmful Immigration Executive Orders on Day 1

In partnership with the Value our Families and No Muslim Ban Ever Campaigns, LWV advocated for President-elect Biden to fulfill his promise and rescind every iteration of the Muslim Ban, including the African Ban, as well as all related bans and Executive Orders on his first day in office. In addition, the League urges the incoming administration to restart our immigration system by processing visas expeditiously and increasing the refugee admissions goal to 100,000 for the remainder of fiscal year 2021. [Read the letter.](#)

League Joins Principles for Immigrant COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

In letters to the CDC and Biden COVID-19 Transition Team, LWV joined allies in laying out clear principles for COVID-19 vaccine distribution to immigrants. These principles

include best practices around data collection and sharing, in particular with immigration enforcement agencies. Fundamentally, the League urged the incoming administration to prioritize community-centered healthcare accessible to all. [Read the letter.](#)

LWV Signs Onto Comments Opposing Environmental Regulation Rollbacks

The League joined national environmental advocates to oppose the Department of Transportation's midnight rulemaking to curtail National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) regulations. Finalizing this rulemaking would make it much more difficult for the agency to analyze the climate justice impacts of future transportation and infrastructure projects. [Read the letter.](#)

LWV U.S. Climate Team: Renewable Energy Webinar

The League of Women Voters U.S. Climate Team, Renewable Energy Group, invites you to attend a presentation by [Dr. Martin Keller](#), director of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and president of the Alliance for Sustainable Energy. Dr. Keller will speak on the state of renewable energy research and capacity in the United States. A Q&A session will follow. The webinar will be January 19, 2021 at 9am PST (noon EST). [Register here.](#) Also, visit the [LWV U.S. Climate Team website](#) to learn more about the League of Women Voter's national effort on climate.

Introducing LWV Redistricting Speakers Bureau Program

We are happy to share our new Speakers Bureau Program. As part of our People Powered Fair Maps work, the advocacy team has created a packet explaining how your league can create their own redistricting-focused speakers bureau. This packet has all the information you need to start recruiting, advertising, and building out your own speakers bureau program. Please find the packet on the [League Management Site](#).

January Community Call: Remaining Non-Partisan

Non-partisanship, along with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), are the principal tenets that we hold at the League of Women Voters. Join us on January 26 at 5pm ET to discuss how to remain non-partisan in hyper-partisan times, and how to overcome those challenges by supporting one another. Come and hear from League leaders around the country about the strategies that they have implemented to stay true to LWV principles and come ready to share your own story! [Please register here!](#)

This dialogue follows our DEI training on January 21 about LWV's non-partisan policies. You can register for the DEI training in [here](#).