

## OUR UPCOMING ELECTION: WHAT TO EXPECT

**A**s we approach the 2022 General Election, what can we expect? First, this election will be like those before, with hundreds of professional and volunteer workers doing their best to make sure that voting is secure and accessible for South Carolina’s citizens. Once more, citizens will vote in person or by mail, exercising the most basic of our rights and responsibilities. However, in some other ways this will not be like earlier elections.

Passage of a new election law late in the 2022 session of the General

*One thing never changes.  
Every vote matters.*

Assembly made significant changes in how South Carolina holds elections. For most voters the biggest difference will be a very positive one: the availability of no-excuse early voting. This was first put into place during the primaries but will be available in a general election for the first time (October 24 – November 5, 8:30 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Saturday, closed Sunday, October 30). With more time to prepare for early voting than in the June primary, counties have made major improvements, especially in numbers of polling places. For example, in contrast to single polling locations in June, Charleston plans to provide seven early voting locations and Lexington will provide five.

Other changes have been made in the process for excused absentee voting, which is now exclusively by mail. An absentee application can be requested by phone, mail, or in person at a county elections office (not by email or fax). The deadline to obtain an application is 11 days before Election Day. Absentee ballots will be sent by mail. Completed ballots must be returned to county elections offices by mail or in person no later than 7 PM on Election Day or in person at an early voting center during early voting hours.

For the first time, witnesses for the absentee ballot must print their name in addition to signing and must provide their address on the return envelope. Since South Carolina does not permit county offices to notify voters of technical defects and correct them, failure to conform to the requirements will lead to rejection of a ballot. Those voting by mail should take special care that their application and their ballot are complete and submitted as early as possible.

In addition, an authorized representative can submit no more than five absentee applications or return no more than five absentee ballots in addition to their own. This and some other election violations have been made felonies. This restriction will make voting more difficult for many in group living situations.

These changes are occurring against the backdrop of a very disturbing national effort to unreasonably discredit the institutions, people, and processes at the foundation of our representative

democracy. Misinformation charging both technical and fraudulent problems in our elections, some of it intentionally disruptive, is everywhere. This toxic atmosphere has shaken the confidence of many voters and has contributed to the loss of many of our critically important experienced election professionals and volunteers. However, diligent efforts are being made to overcome those losses and ensure an orderly and efficient election process for everyone in our state.

One thing never changes. Every vote matters. For more information about candidates and the election, we encourage all eligible citizens to visit VOTE411, the League’s “one-stop” information website.  
—Lynn S. Teague, LWVSC Vice President,  
Issues & Advocacy

### Highlights

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# Defending Democracy

“Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty” is a truism often attributed to Thomas Jefferson, perhaps erroneously. Regardless of who said it, the message still resonates today. Who would have thought that many of our rights and the foundations of our democracy on which we have depended for many, if not 200, years would be under attack?

Many believed that a woman’s right to privacy in making the most personal decisions regarding her health and well-being could not be denied after fifty years of life under *Roe v. Wade*. Yet through the trick of preventing a previous president from filling a Supreme Court vacancy

*We must continue to defend our rights and protect the majority from the imposition of a minority’s beliefs.*

in a presidential election year, a more moderate court ultimately became one intent on reversing the 1973 decision. As someone who supports a woman’s right to choose, I have long understood that when a woman cannot control her fertility, she can’t control her life. With the *Dobbs* decision, women in effect have become second-class citizens compelled by male-dominated legislatures in many states to carry unplanned, unwanted pregnancies to term. With this decision, we have reason to fear that the Court may not stop with abortion but might reverse years of progress on interracial and same-sex marriages and access to contraception. We

must continue to defend our rights and protect the majority from the imposition of a minority’s beliefs.

Universal, non-sectarian, and tax-supported public education, a keystone of American democracy since the 1840’s, is also under attack. Persons fearful of multiculturalism and the sharing of a complete, forthright history of our imperfect country are banning books, discrediting teachers and librarians, and working to siphon off public funds for private and sectarian schools. As Thomas Jefferson and Horace Mann knew, public education is the great defender against ignorance and the great equalizer that provides students of different social and economic backgrounds with the knowledge and skills they need to participate in our democracy. Among those skills are those of critical thinking, communication, and the ability to negotiate differences. In order to defend democracy, we must continue to protect public education from those who would undermine it and who would censor access to books and ideas.

Perhaps of greatest importance, our elections—which reflect the will of the people—and the infrastructure that supports them are under attack as well. Who would have thought that the loser in a presidential election would have refused to oversee the peaceful transfer of power? We of the League have been concerned about gerrymandering and efforts to suppress the vote by requiring voter IDs, limiting voting by mail, outlawing drop boxes, and “purging” voter rolls. More pernicious, however, are recent attempts to subvert the vote by installing partisan election workers, boards, and staff and by training observers to disrupt the election process. During the June primaries, disruptors in at least one South Carolina



county hovered over poll workers and photographed activity and machinery with the intent of discovering non-existent fraud. Whereas we as a country have been rightly concerned about external attacks on our elections from foreign actors, these attacks are home-grown attacks from the inside. And we expect more attacks and more claims of fraud and rigged elections in the general election.

So vigilance—and action—are required. As our collective impact figures on the adjoining page illustrate, our state and local Leagues have been working hard in our past fiscal and program year to advance our mission. We have equipped thousands of citizens with the information they need to vote and have educated them as to the actions they need to take to protect our rights and our democratic institutions. We were successful in advocating for a bipartisan bill to create two weeks of early voting in our state and have supported a lawsuit alleging racial gerrymandering in the first congressional district. Nonetheless, as we continue to make progress, we know that eternal vigilance is required in defense of our democracy.

—Nancy Williams, LWVSC President

## Prefer digital only?

If you’re currently receiving a print copy of the *SC Voter* and would prefer digital only, please email [league@lwvsc.org](mailto:league@lwvsc.org).

## Follow us!

**Facebook:** League of Women Voters of South Carolina

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# OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT 2021-2022

## GROWING OUR LEAGUE COMMUNITY

- 13** local Leagues in SC
- 2** member-at-large units (+1)

## INCREASING VOTER ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

- 32,309** voters educated via VOTE411 re: 359 local races in off-election year
- 6,168** people received voter registration assistance at 237 events with the help of 338 volunteers
- 22** candidate forums hosted
- 1,005,134** people received information to actively participate in our democracy through voter and citizen education programs

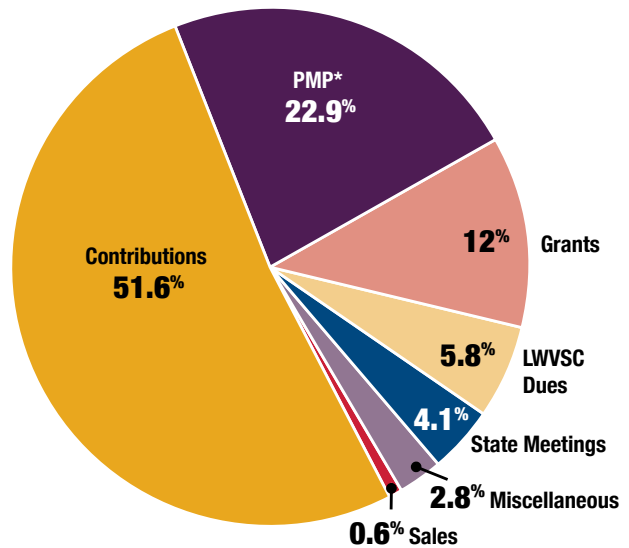
## GROWING OUR ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM

- 32** advocacy partner organizations
- 43** Making Democracy Work Network Updates to partners
- 70** oral and/or written testimonies for 35 bills at the State House
- 8** written and oral testimonies on redistricting
- 22** action alerts
- 80** activists attending monthly legislative updates

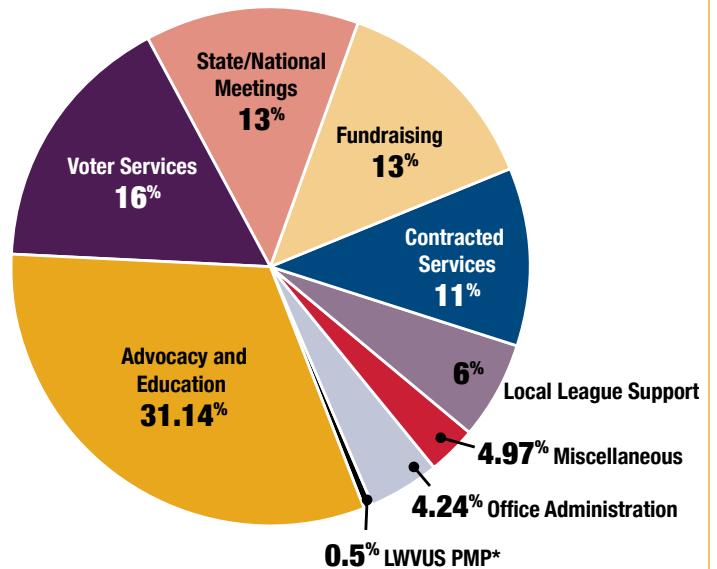
## STRENGTHENING OUR OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

- \$31,761** raised in non-restricted funds; 3.3 percent increase
- 142** donors

## Our Revenue



## Our Expenses



\*PMP is Per Member Payment to LWVSC as income or to LWVUS as expense

# LOCALS MOBILIZE MIDTERM VOTERS

**S**outh Carolina Leagues are working to have voters ready for the General Election on November 8. Voter registration remains paramount. Leagues are going into public and private high schools, tech schools, colleges, universities, community centers, senior centers and senior living communities to register people and help voters update their registration information when needed. League members have set up registrations in public libraries and at sporting events, housing complexes, and theaters. The Charleston Area League has a voter services team of more than forty people engaging in approximately thirty-five voter registration events in their tri-county area in September and October alone.

The Spartanburg League held a computer workshop on National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) to send their local high schools information about registering students online. The Sumter League assisted with five registrations on NVRD.

Charleston League members are recording public service announcements to get out the vote. The Greenville League is promoting VOTE411 and candidate interviews on a local podcast, Simple Civics, hosted by a nonpartisan group of local nonprofits. Columbia has door hangers, and Charleston has door hanger bags with VOTE411 postcards and county election schedules in them to disseminate information.

Columbia and Delta Sigma Theta are partnering to get out the vote. Greenville and the NAACP have partnered to do a voter registration challenge in the high schools and offer rides to the polls on Election Day. Greenville has also partnered with Public Education Partners to target teachers for voter registration and education with VOTE411. The Spartanburg County League has partnered with more than fourteen nonpartisan groups to offer voter registration and education.

Charleston planned candidate forums from late September to mid-October to include school board races, some state representatives' races, local county councils and mayoral elections. Local Leagues have scheduled many other candidate forums throughout South Carolina.

—Elizabeth Jones,  
LWVSC Vice President, Voter Services



A well-deserved “thumbs up” to LWV Spartanburg for their success in registering new voters!



LWV York County’s registration “rock stars” worked summer festival crowds.



Members of LWV Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Area and their Student Advisory Committee reached out to potential voters at community events and high school junior/senior assemblies.



LWV Beaufort Area’s National Voter Registration Day event generated great energy and tips to be #VoteReady at USC Beaufort.

## Leagues in Action

**Anderson County:** Held voter registration drives at Tri-County Tech's campuses, with an enrollment of 6,082 students across all its campuses.

**Beaufort Area:** Co-hosted a state-wide Zoom related to women's reproductive rights following reversal of Roe vs. Wade.

**Charleston Area:** Presented the League's annual Spirit of Democracy award to Dot Scott, President of the Charleston Branch of the NAACP.

**Columbia Area:** Participated in the Jubilee Festival and a church fun day; distributed over 600 VOTE411 cards and talked to many people about their voting plans.

**Darlington County:** Participated in a community Darlington County School Board Candidate Forum, Coker University Campus, Hartsville, on September 25.

**Florence Area:** Spent two Saturdays in September registering voters and answering many questions.

**Georgetown County:** Registered voters at Horry County Tech College and the September 2 Delta Festival, and on National Voter Registration Day at Waccamaw High School.

**Greenville County:** Produced a detailed, 7-page Voter's Guide in both a magazine and web format; provided an editable copy that all Leagues could localize and rebrand.

**Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Area:** Launched a Facebook and Instagram campaign to expand our audience; added 10 student members, gaining support for in-school voter registration drives and community event volunteers.

**Horry County:** Listened to Marion Foxworth, Registrar of Deeds, explain the referendums on the ballot: two

constitutional amendments as well as a local amendment.

**Oconee-Pickens Counties:** At our first program, asked members to vote for the "Woman of the Decade" as represented by a LWV member in a 3-minute introduction.

**Orangeburg County:** Hosted voter registration drives at the Calhoun County Library (co-hosted with Disability Rights SC) and the Orangeburg County Library.

**Spartanburg County:** Joined the Spartanburg Get-Out-the-Vote Coalition, a group of 14+ nonpartisan organizations whose goal is to activate citizens to vote.

**Sumter County:** Assisted with five registration events on National Voter Registration Day.

**York County:** Participated in York's Summerfest on August 27; engaged with many voters about the upcoming elections and promoted VOTE411.

## Target: 2023 SC Medicaid Expansion

Talking to a graduate student revealed a quandary over her health care coverage. She quit her job to pursue full-time school, thinking that her income would be low enough to qualify for Medicaid. She could not afford to use COBRA to extend her insurance.

But she did not qualify for Medicaid, as most adults do not, unless low-income with children or disabled. She did not make enough to qualify for the Affordable Care Act insurance since she had quit her job. In all but twelve states, she would be covered under Medicaid because those states chose to expand their coverage. The federal government matches \$9 for every \$1 the states put up. South Carolina chose not to expand coverage of Medicaid to low-income workers.

The graduate student was stunned. "Wait, that means I fall in a gap where I cannot get coverage!"

Exactly. But a new statewide coalition hopes to change that. Their long-term goal is to persuade South Carolina lawmakers to enact Medicaid expansion

covering all with incomes at or below 138% of the federal poverty level.

Health care coverage needs to be affordable. Only 49% of employed South Carolinians are enrolled in private employer-sponsored health insurance. Seventy percent of small businesses in SC do not offer health insurance according to research done by the League of Women Voters SC Health Care Working Group.

Uninsured folks can be more accountable for their health care with health insurance. Expanding Medicaid to older adults helps decrease hospitalizations and improve management of heart disease, for example, as reported by the SC Institute for Medicine and Public Health.

Expanding Medicaid can reduce medical debt and promote financial independence. Right now, more than 25% of SC families have medical debt, the largest category for debt and the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in the country.

Republican legislators, the majority party in SC, refuse to enact Medicaid

expansion stating that it is too costly. But, the Commonwealth Fund's new study on economic growth and new tax revenue in the 12 non-expansion states projected SC would generate 30,000 new jobs and \$68 million in new tax revenue annually by year 3 from the federal investment.

Recent AARP polling shows that nearly 8 in 10 South Carolina voters support expanding Medicaid to state residents earning less than \$18,000 a year. Those numbers include 69% of Republican voters supporting Medicaid expansion, so this is one of those issues that hits the sweet spot of bipartisanship.

Stay tuned for more information on this vital issue as we approach the SC 2023 legislative session and on what you can do to help. I am especially appreciative of the hard work of Lynne Eickholt who did the majority of the work pulling all these facts together.

— Teresa Arnold, LWVSC Director,  
Health Care Advocacy Specialist/  
Lobbyist

# SEPTIMA CLARK: A ROLE MODEL FOR THE LEAGUE

**R**eflecting back on her interactions with Septima Clark at the Highlander Folk School, civil rights activist Rosa Parks stated, “If only I could catch some of her spirit.”

It is *that* spirit that the Charleston League hoped to spread throughout our greater community as we commissioned an original play based on the life of civil and voting rights activist, public school teacher, LWV member and, as she was described by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., “mother of the Movement,” Septima Poinsette Clark.

Clark was born in Charleston in 1898 and worked as a public school teacher in South Carolina for nearly 40 years. In 1956, at age 58, she was fired for refusing to give up her membership in the NAACP, and was stripped of her pension. She then served as the director of workshops at the Highlander Folk School until the state of Tennessee forced Highlander to close in 1961. Clark continued her work as the director of education for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Through her frontline work in establishing and teaching in citizenship schools, recruiting and training teachers, and developing curricula, Clark enabled thousands—perhaps hundreds of thousands—of African Americans to learn to read and to register to vote.

We can think of no better role model to inspire us to keep up our work of empowering voters and defending democracy. And we are thrilled that our plan to bring Clark’s story and her spirit to the next generation of South Carolina citizens is moving ahead.

The dynamic black feminist writer and educator, Patricia Williams Lessane, agreed to write this original work, and completed the first draft in September. Dr. Lessane is currently an Associate Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at Morgan State University in Baltimore, MD. She previously served as the director of the Avery Institute and a faculty member at the College of Charleston.

PURE Theatre will produce the play, with a world premier in Charleston in March - April 2023. Following the performances at PURE Theatre, we plan to develop opportunities to bring the play to school districts throughout South Carolina.

In addition to the financial contributions of members and friends of the LWVCA, critical support for this project came from the Gamma Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and Boeing South Carolina, as well as from YWCA Greater Charleston and The Citadel School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

We would welcome additional sponsorship support, and interested parties should reach out to Donna Englander Factor at [dfactor1649@gmail.com](mailto:dfactor1649@gmail.com).

—Leah Pederson, LWV of the Charleston Area



Rosa Parks with Septima Clark (center) and her mother Leona McCauley (right) at the Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee, 1956.



LWV of the Charleston Area celebrated the launch of the Septima Clark play project with playwright Patricia Lessane (center). Friends and family members of Septima Clark also attended.

# WE APPRECIATE OUR DONORS

We couldn't do it without you!

LWVSC is so grateful to our donors—at all levels! Your financial support helped advance our mission: empowering voters and defending democracy. Know that your gifts fueled our ability to inform voters about issues and candidates, and strengthened our advocacy efforts. Together we've made a difference in South Carolina. Thank you!

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\*This list reflects donations from July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022. Donations received after June 30 will be included in our 2022-23 report.

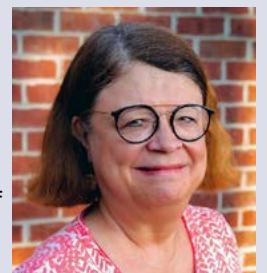


**Voting Matters: Suppression and Disenfranchisement, an August 18 symposium in Aiken, featured Lynn Teague, LWVSC VP for Issues & Advocacy, with Leon Russell, National Board Chairman of the NAACP; Eugene White, Jr, President of the Aiken Branch of the NAACP; and Stephanie Franklin, Moderator, USC Aiken Inclusion Advisory Council.**

## Paula Egelson, New LWVSC Director

We're extremely pleased to welcome Dr. Pauline (Paula) Egelson as our new LWVSC at-large board member. A long-time League member, Paula has worked as a community organizer, a classroom teacher, a professional developer, a researcher, and a school improvement director in the states of Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. She retired from the Southern Regional Education Board in Atlanta last year.

Paula has an undergraduate degree in child development from Rockford University, a master's in reading education from Western Carolina University, and a doctorate in educational leadership from University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her areas of expertise include assessment, school improvement, program evaluation, and disadvantaged youth. She has served as the president of a national research organization and is currently Vice President for Citizen Engagement, LWV of the Charleston Area. She continues as a board member for the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. Paula has published journal articles and book chapters on assessment, student teaching, school improvement, class size reduction, and literacy. Currently she is authoring a retrospective book on school improvement with former colleagues. She loves living in Charleston near the water and is an avid traveler and reader.



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Columbia, SC 29202

## SC VOTER

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Established in 1920, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina is a nonpartisan, political organization that encourages people to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. League membership is open to any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the League. All members receive the *SC Voter*, email communications and news from their local League.

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### ON DEMOCRACY'S FRONTLINES: SUPPORT THE LEAGUE



As we look toward the 2023 legislative session, we need your help as never before. Women are in danger in South Carolina. We must keep up the pressure and stand up for women's rights. We must protect our democratic institutions from pernicious attacks.

Help us recruit more advocates and strengthen our voice at the State House. The League of Women Voters of South Carolina is grassroots and volunteer-driven. We depend on your support. Every gift benefits our statewide advocacy, education and outreach.

Donate online: [lwvsc.org](http://lwvsc.org) • Mail: LWVSC, PO Box 8453, Columbia, SC 29202