



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

March 2021

League of Women Voters of Honolulu

## Meet the president of Honolulu League

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### Current News

#### Convention

The League of Women Voters **Hawaii State Convention** is scheduled for Saturday, May 22. Ilona Carlson, Michele Mitsumori, Piilani Kaopuiki and Susan Melchert are planning the convention with assistance from Christopher.

#### Office

The League pays about **\$1,000 a month to rent** the office at Bethel and Hotel St. During the pandemic it has barely been used. We want to explore what the future looks like in the post-pandemic world, where video conferencing and co-working meeting spaces are more common.

#### Vote Count Committee

There is an online service that might be able to provide all the services for vote count for us called **Voatz**. We need a small group to evaluate if this is a digital service that we can utilize to support our union customers so that we don't lose market share to competitors.



In 2020 **Christopher Edwards** was elected president of the League of Women Voters Honolulu. Raised in Mt. Vernon, NY, and Wilton, CT, he has a bachelor's degree in

Business Administration from Western Connecticut State University.

He has lived in Honolulu for 5 years with his wife Anika Gearhart-Edwards, a psychology instructor at Leeward Community College.

When Chris was in high school, he was registered to vote by a member of the League of Women Voters in Wilton, CT at age 17 and never forgot it. That's why he showed up at a Honolulu League Board meeting in 2019. Recognizing his energy and smarts, the Board nominated him for president.

He is passionate about voting rights and helping people to get registered to vote.

His paying job is full-time recruiter for Naku-puna Companies, which helps people get new jobs with his company. They staff Hawaii and federal government projects all around the country. The offices are in Honolulu, Arlington, VA, Denver, CO, and Mechanicsburg, PA, and St. Louis, MO.

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*This is the first of a newly revived newsletter for the League of Women Voters of Honolulu. Email news items to editor Pearl Johnson, [pjohnsonlwv@gmail.com](mailto:pjohnsonlwv@gmail.com). Phone 779-8808.*

## Vote Counts

The main source of income for the Honolulu League has always been counting votes mostly for unions but also for condominium associations and other organizations.

After much work has been done by the Vote Count Committee, members get together to count the ballots. These vote counts have been fun social gatherings while accomplishing real work.

Due to the pandemic, there is no Vote Count Committee, no income. Volunteers and ideas are needed. We recently had to turn down a request from a union for safety reasons.

## City Council Observer

Honolulu League traditionally kept an eye on the City Council. We tried to have an observer at all Council meetings and many committee meetings. But that was long ago.

If you can report on City Council activities by attending meetings either in person or online, or by reading minutes and reports, we need you. Let Christopher or Pearl

## League History

The League of Women Voters of the United States was officially founded in Chicago in 1920, just six months before the 19th amendment was ratified and women won the vote.

Allan Saunders and his wife Marion founded The League of Women Voters of Honolulu in 1948 to carry out the mission of "making democracy work."

## League Television

Honolulu League's television show "Making Democracy Work" has been airing on Olelo channel 53 since 2012. President Christopher Edwards hosts the program, taking over from Kauai Lucas and Pearl Johnson.

The first showing of each month's program is on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, repeated at 4:30 pm the following 4 Wednesdays on channel 53.

You can watch past shows by going to [Olelo.org](http://Olelo.org); under tune in, click on olelonet on demand. In the search box, enter "making democracy work." Programs as far back as 2014 will be available for viewing.

Past shows discussed the Red Hill fuel tanks, Honolulu rail, bail reform, agriculture, voting and many other topics of community interest.

## Membership

Members of Honolulu League now number about 105. Twenty years ago, it was over 300.

"Scholarships" for 25 students to join will be covered by Shaunagh Robbins. We need to figure out how to recruit high school and college students to join and hopefully bring their parents and friends to our League as well. If you have ideas, call Christopher at 203-247-6051 or email him -- [chrisedwardshawaii@gmail.com](mailto:chrisedwardshawaii@gmail.com).

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### From Christopher:

Senator Les Ihara gifted a book called *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again* by Robert D. Putnam. As soon as I'm done reading it I'll pass it around.