



League of Women Voters of NYS **STATE VOTER**

February 2018



From the State President

A number of you have asked me if this month's departure of LWVUS's CEO, Wylecia Wiggs Harris, means that the changes she helped initiate will lose momentum. Answer: No!

While her two years with the League were too short, they gave the whole organization a needed jolt that is moving us forcefully into the 21st century. Some of you heard her talk at ValKill in Hyde Park last April so you know!

And from all I hear (which is quite a bit), everyone at LWVUS remains fully committed to the changes she promoted. In addition, all of us who have met Anisa Tootla over the last two years are pleased to see her move from COO to interim CEO. We know she'll keep LWVUS firmly on track while a national search firm looks for a permanent replacement.

If you don't know what the "transformational journey" is all about, here are two YouTube videos that will help. The first (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWXf90WieHs>) is a summary of a January 2017 conference at the Rockefeller Brothers Pocantico conference center (near Tarrytown, NY) of about 30 League leaders from across the country. Three of us from LWVNYS - executive director Laura Bierman, board secretary, Jane Park, and I - were included. The second (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zt9YsQaLvXg>) is of the June LWVUS Council meeting outside DC which our 1st VP and Voter Services chair, Judie Gorenstein, and I attended and was totally devoted to the journey.

All these efforts are gradually starting to transform us from a history- and process-laden organization into one that is more modern, nimble and works in a more united way across the local, state and national levels. You'll notice that even the new mission statement is shorter and more powerful ("Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy") and that the website works better for young people and their phones.

As the journey continues, it couldn't come at a better time. Inspired by the Women's March, the #MeToo movement, and this week's magnificent advocacy by Parkland students, voters are up in arms. We need to be our best selves and help them in every way we can.

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IN THIS ISSUE

[Regional Training Workshops](#)

[Ballot Ready](#)

[Legislative Updates](#)

[Local League News](#)

LWVNYS Advocacy Training Day

Save the Date!
Tuesday, April 24th
in Albany!

Come learn about our current advocacy agenda and how you can help make our voice heard in the NYS Legislature. More info coming soon to register.

First Call to LWVUS Convention in June 2018

First Call to National Convention 2018

The League of Women Voters' 53rd National Convention will be held at the Hilton Chicago in Chicago, IL, from Thursday, June 28 through Sunday, July 1, 2018. We invite our League members to save these dates and plan to join hundreds of passionate and engaged leaders for our biennial national gathering. More information and the full "first call" is [available here](#).

Travel with the League

TRAVEL WITH THE LEAGUE



Click [here](#) for trips and itineraries.

New Office Manager at State Office



We're happy to welcome Meg McGoldrick to the state League staff as the new Office Manager. You'll meet Meg when you call the office or you can email her at Meg@lwnvy.org. She is already a great asset to us!

Regional Training Workshops



League of Women Voters of NYS Regional Training Meetings March - April 2018

The League of Women Voters of NYS invites all members to come to training workshops being held throughout the state on **Saturdays from 10:00-3:00** in March and April. All members are invited to attend any or all of the workshops. All local Leagues board members are strongly encouraged to attend at least part of the day. Lunch will be provided and will allow for informal networking among the attendees (no program). There is a \$20 charge to cover other expenses.

March 17, Capital Region

(Unitarian Church of Schenectady, 1221 Wendall Ave, Schenectady, NY 12308)

March 24, Westchester Area

(Mamaroneck Public Library, 136 Prospect Ave, Mamaroneck, NY 10543)

April 7, Cortland Area

(CNY Living History Museum, 4386 US-11, Cortland, NY 13045)

April 14, Rochester Area

(Rush Henrietta Senior High School, 1799 Lehigh Station Rd, Henrietta, NY 14467)

Tentative Workshop Topics

- Moderating Candidate Forums
- Creatively Managing Your Local League
- Getting your Members Active on Issues
- Motivating Voters to Vote
- Engaging Youth in Our Democracy
- Social Media & Apps for Engaging New Members and the Public
- Becoming a Player in Your Community: Observer Corps, Hot Topics & Collaboration
- Raising Funds & Having Fun
- Making the Most of Voter Service Activities
- Civic Education & Engagement for Students & Communities

[Click here for registration form](#); send completed form and \$20 check payable to LWVNYS to: League of Women Voters of NYS, 62 Grand St, Albany, NY 12207

Or [register by clicking here](#), with credit card, by fax 518-465-0812 or by phone 518-465-4162 or email Meg@lwnvy.org

Ballot Ready Electronic Voter Guide

Electronic Voter Guide: Ballot Ready

As many of you have heard, the state League will not be subscribing to Vote 411 this year for its electronic voter guide. Instead, we have a contract with Ballot Ready to provide race and candidate information online. You can view their website at: <https://www.ballotready.org/> or see how ours will look at the LWV of IL website (they have an election coming up): <https://lwvill.civicengine.com/>. The good news is that the local Leagues will have to do NOTHING for this program but can provide questions for candidates if they desire. Ballot Ready will cover ALL races in NYS for the June primary, September primary and the November general election.

Watch for more information on this new service!

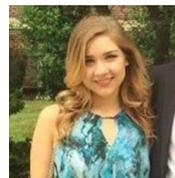
Legislative Updates

Sally Robinson, sally.s.robinson@gmail.com, and
Jennifer Wilson, jennifer@lwvny.org



Current Legislative Action

This month the legislature has been fixated on the Governor's executive budget proposal. His original proposal included legislation to allow for early voting but not funding to assist counties with implementation. In his 30 day budget amendments, the Governor added \$7,000,000 in funding for early voting. We were elated with



the new funding and quickly issued a statement thanking the Governor for prioritizing voting reforms.

During this entire month, the League and our good government partners advocated for this funding. We encouraged members to reach out to their legislators and the Governor to explain to them the importance of including funding for early voting. The League also submitted testimony on the Governor's proposed voting reforms to the Joint Budget Committees on Public Protections.

In addition to our voting work, our Education Specialist, Marian Bott, testified to the Joint Budget Committees on Education. She advocated to increase funding for low income school districts and to fully implement CFE.

Now that February is coming to a close, the legislature is on a 2 week break. We have asked our Local Leagues to meet with their legislators while they are home and remind them that funding for early voting must be included in the final joint budget package. If your League participated in an in district visit, be sure to send your response for to me at Jennifer@lwvny.org

Sign Up for the Weekly Legislative Newsletter

This year the League has launched a new initiative to help keep members up-to-date on what's going on in Albany. Our weekly legislative newsletter includes what's happening at the Capitol, upcoming events surrounding advocacy, weekly legislative committee agendas, and weekly League news clips. The newsletter is sent to all members every Friday. If you haven't been receiving the newsletter, check your Spam or Junk folder or email Jennifer at Jennifer@lwvny.org to make sure you're on the list.

Advocacy Training and Lobby Day

The state League's **annual Advocacy Training and Lobby Day has been scheduled for April 24th** in the NYS Museum (we'll make sure you have time to view the special exhibit at the Museum on women's suffrage history, too). **Any member is welcome to attend.** Come learn about our advocacy agenda, hear directly from the Issue Specialists about our expected action for the 2018 Legislative Session and lobby your own legislators.

[Click here](#) to print out and mail a registration form. [Click here to register online.](#) The topics on which we will be lobbying will depend on how the budget negotiations turn out.

Local League News

Dr. Lori V. Quigley, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Medaille College, will join the **LWV of Buffalo/Niagara** for International Women's Day! Dr. Quigley, a member of the Wolf Clan, grew up in the Allegany Seneca Nation of Indians. Sharing her mother's and her own personal story, she will help us gain a deeper appreciation of the role Haudenosaunee women continue to play in contemporary society and their role in the future.



In conjunction with The Cold Spring Harbor Library and Next Generation Politics, **LWV of Huntington** presented a program "Youth Engaging Youth." Both Sophie Stein and Caitlin Eivers, upcoming attendees at the state League's "Students Inside Albany Conference" participate. (see photo on left)

Oppression, persecution, adversity and even genocide have affected ethnic and cultural groups throughout the annals of history. **LWV of Albany County's** Nell Stokes-Holmes will take attendees through a powerful retelling of Black history in America. Guest presenters will then offer insight as to the factors that influenced resilience and fortitude in the face of such oppression and adversity - faith and spirituality, music, martyrs and heroes, and strong women figures in the family.

"Bail Reform: What's It All About? A Look at the Current State of Affairs and Legislative Proposals" was the discussion at a recent meeting of the **LWV of Rochester**. Presenters included Iman Abid, Director, Genesee Valley Chapter NYCLU; Tim Donaher, Monroe County Public Defender; Precious Bedell, Founder and Director of Turning Points Resource Center (Prison Ministry - Episcopal Diocese of Rochester); Gary Pudup, Retired Monroe County Sheriff's Command Officer, Former Chapter Director of the Genesee Valley Chapter NYCLU

LWV of Schenectady's Health Committee is considering organizing a community forum on the opioid epidemic this spring.

LWV of Saratoga has organized a *Democracy Series: Defending the Constitution* with three programs about the core principles of the U.S. Constitution. The first is *Making Democracy Work: Constitutional Principles in an Age of Uncertainty*; second is *Dying to Vote: Countering Strategic Efforts to Suppress Voting Rights*; and the third is *The First Amendment: Our Obligation to Assemble, Protest, and Protect the Free Press*. See their website for more details.

A lunch was hosted by **LWV of Chautauqua** with the speaker, Lori Cornell, who currently serves as Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's Regional Representative for WNY, responsible for Chautauqua, Cattaraugus and Allegany Counties.

The Education Committee of the **LWV of the Hamptons** has decided to meet with first grade Girl Scouts to offer assistance in earning their Suffrage Badges.

LWV of East Nassau Board member and Students Inside Albany Coordinator Lorraine Newman recently received an email from Dominique Masi, the Island Park High School student who represented LWVEN at the 2017 League of Women Voters of New York State Students Inside Albany (SIA) conference last spring. Now a student at Colgate University, Dominique wanted to express her appreciation for the opportunity to attend the conference. She wrote: *"Everything is going great here, I cannot be happier. I talk about my experience in Albany all the time. I check in with my roommate [from SIA] from time to time. Thank you for selecting me to go. At school, we just had a voter-registration drive. It was successful. I requested my absentee ballot to vote and am encouraging others to vote for positions in their hometowns as well. I will be preparing my schedule for next semester with a political science class. We will see what happens..."*

The Natural Resources Committee of the **LWV of Tompkins County** presented the program "Housing Needed: Affordable for People - Friendly for the Environment, It Can Be Done!" Speakers were Megan McDonald, Deputy Commissioner of the Tompkins County Department of Planning and

Sustainability and Joe Bowes, Director of Real Estate Development, Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services. Co-sponsors were Campaign for Renewable Energy, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Fossil Free Tompkins, Sustainable Tompkins, and Tompkins County Environmental Management Council.

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