

Member Bulletin



February 2023

"There can be no divided democracy, no class government, no half-free county, under the constitution. Therefore, there can be no discrimination, no segregation, no separation of some citizens from the rights which belong to all. ... We are on our way. But these are frontiers which we must conquer. ... We must gain full equality in education ... in the franchise ... in economic opportunity, and full equality in the abundance of life." Mary McLeod Bethune, *Chicago Defender*, 1954.

February brings the League's birthday and Black History Month - both of which serve as celebrations of those on whose shoulders we stand and stark reminders of how much further we have to go. Let this month serve as an annual renewal of our commitment to work for a democracy where equal rights for all are a reality.

[Allyson E. Haut, Ph.D.](#)

President

League of Women Voters of Illinois

[Mary McLeod Bethune](#), an educator, civil rights leader, and government official, was one of the 20th century's most important leaders.

Advocacy
begins
at home



ISSUES
BRIEFING
February 18

LWVIL's annual Issues Briefing is your opportunity to take a deeper look at issues facing our state and find out about legislation currently being considered in the Illinois General Assembly.

Learn from legislators and nonpartisan experts during this full day of virtual programming brought to you on Zoom. Invite friends and neighbors! We all need to be informed and prepared to engage and advocate for what our communities need. Registration fees are waived for students, and complimentary tickets are available. Issues Briefing is for everyone.

Join the opening session on defending democracy against threats to elections. Then choose from sessions on racism in schools, juvenile justice, carbon capture/sequestration, housing, gun violence and reproductive rights. Close the day with a final session on using grassroots power to get a bill passed. Click below for complete session descriptions and speaker information.

[Go to Issues Briefing information and registration.](#)



LWVIL
Needs
YOU!



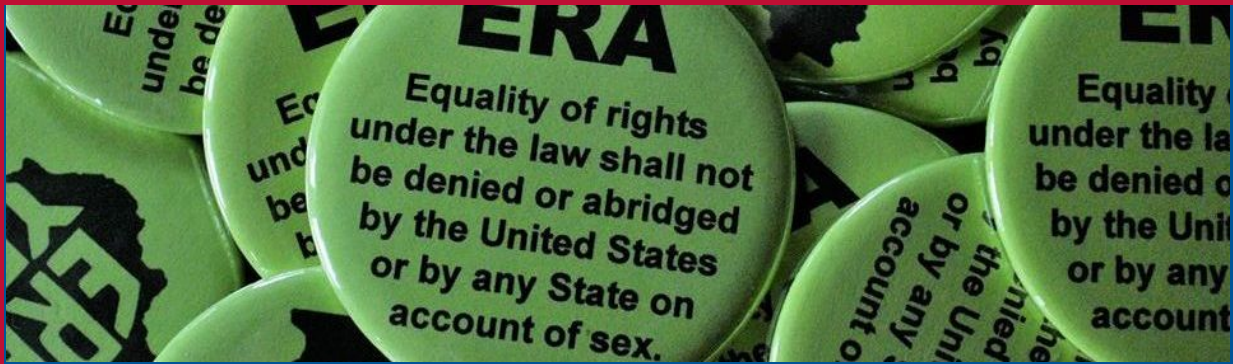
Are you ready to help build LWVIL as the best resource possible for local Leagues and communities around the state?

Come find out what it is like to put your talent, drive, and dedication to work on the state level.

Please apply to fill one of the vacancies on the **current** LWVIL board and discover whether or not serving on the state Board is a good fit for you. Contact Nominating Committee Chair, Jan Dorner, jdorner@lwwil.org, to learn more about LWVIL board service.

Or, explore opportunities to serve during the 2023-25 biennium. Complete the [brief application](#) or contact [Jan Dorner](#) with questions.

We are particularly interested in experience in any one of the following areas: Development and Fundraising;



It is time for the 28th Amendment.

Illinois is at the forefront of the work to make sure that the US Constitution provides equal protection under the law for all genders.

Last Tuesday, January 31, US legislators introduced a joint resolution in Congress, to remove the deadline for ratification of the ERA and recognize it as a part of the US Constitution.

Illinois Senator Dick Durbin is among those leading the push to make equality the law of the land. Not only is he among the resolution's cosponsors, as Chair of the Judicial Committee he will hold a hearing on the issue and then urge the senate to pass the resolution. "Equal rights shouldn't have to wait any longer," says Durbin. "We have the power to do something about it."

It is time. The ERA was first drafted in 1923 by suffragist Alice Paul, and was introduced in every session of Congress for the next 49 years. In 1972, it was approved by overwhelming majorities in both House and Senate, and sent to the states for ratification. The 38-state threshold needed to become part of the US Constitution proved elusive until in 2018, when Illinois became the 37th state to ratify, and Virginia became the 38th in a 2020.

However, the ERA has yet to be added to the Constitution. The bicameral resolution introduced this week would ensure the ERA's place as the 28th Amendment to the Constitution, finally guaranteeing equal protections under the law regardless of gender or sex.

Speak up!

Contact Senator Durbin and thank him for his leadership on the ERA. Tell Senators Durbin and Duckworth and your US Representative you support this resolution. Contact friends and networks outside of Illinois and ask them to do the same with their Senators and US Representatives. [Find your congresspersons.](#)

Here in Illinois, State Representative Jennifer Gong-Gershowtiz introduced a resolution affirming that the ERA has satisfied all constitutional requirements and is fully ratified. The resolution, [HJR1](#), also calls on Congress and the White House to affirm ERA ratification.

Contact your [state representative](#) and ask them to [co-](#)

Speak up!

[sponsor resolution HJR1.](#)

It is time to end one hundred years without equal protection under the law.

VOTE

IllinoisVoterGuide.org

Yes, it's Election Season. Again.

Find calendars for the February 28 and April 4 Consolidated Elections in the [GOTV Toolbox](#) on the LWVIL website [For Members>League Resources](#) page. Share on social media or print and post in your community.

VOTE

IllinoisVoterGuide.org

Tuesday, February 28 Illinois Consolidated Primary

- Nov. 30 First day to apply for a vote by mail ballot.
- Jan. 19 First day to vote early at office of most election authorities. Check with your election authority for details.
First day for the election authority to mail an official ballot to a registered voter within the United States.
- Feb. 1 First day of grace period for in person registration and voting at election authority & early voting sites; continues through election day.
- Feb. 12 Last day for online voter registration. Grace period in person registration available at election authority & early voting sites.
- Feb. 13 First day to vote early at permanent polling places. (Vote early at the office of the election authority starting January 19.)
- Feb. 23 Last day for election authority to receive vote by mail applications.
- Feb. 28 **Primary Election Day!**
Polls open from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm.

Non-partisan voter information
Powered by the League of Women Voters of Illinois
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www.LWVIL.org

VOTE

IllinoisVoterGuide.org

Tuesday, April 4 Illinois Consolidated Election

- Jan. 4 First day to apply for a vote by mail ballot.
- Feb. 23 First day to vote early at office of most election authorities. Check with your election authority for details.
First day for the election authority to mail an official ballot to a registered voter within the United States.
- March 8 First day of grace period for in person registration and voting at election authority & early voting sites; continues through election day.
- March 10 First day to vote early or by mail if a primary was held in your election jurisdiction.
- March 19 Last day for online voter registration. Grace period in person registration available at election authority & early voting sites.
- March 20 First day to vote early at permanent polling places. (Vote early at the office of the election authority starting February 23.)
- March 30 Last day for election authority to receive vote by mail applications.
- April 4 **Primary Election Day!**
Polls open from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm.

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Candidate information in Illinois Voter Guide

Candidate and ballot information is now available for the February 28 Consolidated Elections/Primaries and will be available in early March for the April 4 Consolidated Elections.

[IllinoisVoterGuide.org](#) will cover the following races for towns with with populations greater than 10,000: Mayor/President, Clerk, Treasurer, City Council/Alderpersons.

[Illinois Voter Guide](#) will also cover **all School Board Elections in the state** .

Candidate profiles will include education, experience and background found on candidates' websites and other internet sources. Candidate forum recordings will be uploaded where available from local Leagues.

Voters who go to IllinoisVoterGuide.org can always check their registration and register. As ballot information becomes available, voters can apply for a vote by mail ballot, see their ballot, find their dropbox location, and find when and where to vote.

LWVIL has tools to help you drive voter turnout.

Start by looking at the [Illinois Voter Guide Materials](#) page for IllinoisVoterGuide.org business cards. Carry them with you, hand them out at train stations and coffee shops, and share the images on social media.

For more ideas, go to the LWVIL website [For Members>League Resources](#) page and scroll down to Voter Service.

- Check out the [Get Out the Vote Idea Guide](#), designed to help all local Leagues energize and activate voters.
- Go to the [GOTV Toolbox](#) for downloadable LWVIL graphics for social media and printable items such as business cards, flyers, and yard signs.



Show your passion for voting! Use these handy graphics in emails or on social media and express your passion about the importance of everyone using their voice at the ballot box. Find downloadable graphics in the [GOTV Toolbox](#) on the LWVIL website [For Members>League Resources](#) page .

Bring a mock election to a school near you!

Most high school seniors will be 18 in time to vote in the April 4 Consolidated Election, which includes school board races. Help generate excitement and civic engagement by staging a mock election at school! LWVIL Voter Service has developed materials to get you started; find them in the [GOTV Toolbox](#) on the LWVIL website [For Members>League Resources](#) page.

The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any candidate or party. Period.

The League is a highly respected resource for nonpartisan information, which can be

hard to find during our hyper-partisan times! During election season, it is crucial that you and your League are staunch guardians of our nonpartisanship.

Avoid any appearance of bias:

- Make sure there is a clear separation between voter education and any advocacy or legislation education activities
- Voter education and advocacy should not take place at the same event
- League members may not advocate for, or mention, ballot items such as referenda in the vicinity of a forum venue
- Leagues should not schedule or promote meetings or education activities with any candidates for office, including any elected officials who are running for office
- When in doubt, err on the side of caution, and please reach out to voterservice@lwvil.org

Protect our respect. Make sure all League events are strictly nonpartisan.

New LWVIL Candidate Participation Policy

LWVIL has revised the [Candidate Participation Policy](#) for forums and voter guides. Please review it carefully before planning forums for Consolidated Elections. Notably, the new policy increases the allowable time for a candidate statement from 2 minutes to 3 minutes. Candidate statements are used in situations where a scheduled forum for two or more candidates must be canceled due to the Empty Chair Rule. Find the Candidate Participation Policy on the LWVIL website [For Members>League Resources](#) page under LWVIL Board Policies and also Candidate Forums.

Chicago Mayoral Debate

Another successful Mayoral debate for the books! LWVIL and LWV Chicago partnered with ABC7 and Univision to host all nine Chicago mayoral candidates on January 19.

For nearly three decades, LWVIL has partnered with ABC7 to hold televised debates for major mayoral, gubernatorial and congressional races.

The debates follow LWVIL standards and LWVIL collaborates in crafting candidate invitations, establishing ground rules, creating candidate questions, and assisting in the studio with timing.

The January 19 mayoral debate was live streamed by both ABC7 and Univision (with simultaneous translation) on their various media platforms. Both stations



also broadcast the debate on Sunday, January 22: UNIMAS (WXFT-TV) at 4:00 pm, and ABC 7.1 at 10:30 pm. C-SPAN will air the debate in the near future at a time to be announced.



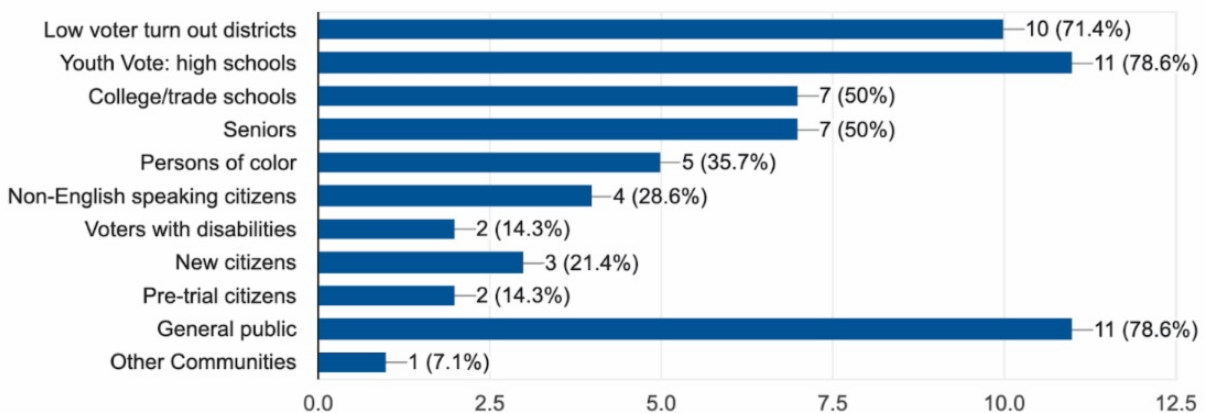
Thank you to the 14 Leagues that responded to the LWVIL 2022 Voter Service Impact Survey!



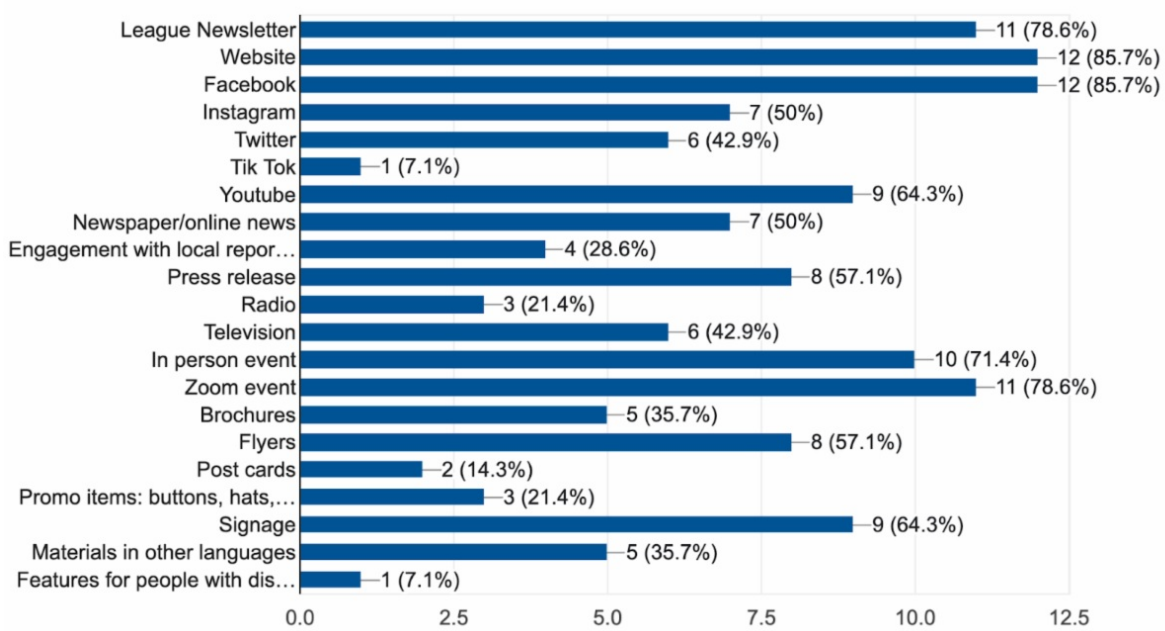
Your impact is measurable!

- 3000 voter registrations (with hundreds more assisted online registrations)
- 63 forums
- 11 meet and greets
- 1 mock election at a high school
- 9 Observer Corp teams
- 44 active Observer Corp members observe school boards, library boards, park districts, city councils/committees, county board/committees, county health boards, forest preserves, and metropolitan water boards

You helped voters in a variety of communities.



You educated and activated using a variety of tools.



You faced hurdles

- not enough volunteers
- not enough resources
- trouble obtaining candidate emails
- reluctant candidates for forums
- effect of Covid on in-person events

You had many successes

- engaging new immigrants
- connecting with new businesses
- voter education walk-in at the library
- voter education at food pantries
- ethnic festivals & voter ed materials in Spanish
- high school ambassador program
- new collaborations with community organizations

LWVIL Observer Training

Saturday, March 18

10:00–11:00 am

Strengthen your League's Observer Corps. The League's trained Observer Corps are a respected part of our communities—working to keep local governments accountable and community members informed.

Registration required. *Members only. Registration closes 24 hours prior to the event. The event link will be sent a day in advance and one hour before the event.*

JUNE 9-11
CONVENTION 2023

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'
OF ILLINOIS

LWVIL Convention is coming!

Convention is when we come together to shape our upcoming biennium. Across the nation, state Leagues are gathering to determine the focus of their power—positions, advocacy resources, bylaws, budget, board—all decisions that impact mission work at the grassroots level.

LWVIL is looking forward to convening in a virtual space that will be accessible and inclusive for the voices of League members throughout the state. No matter where in the state you are, your League can be heard. Consider being a delegate for your League and watch for more information in coming months.

Program Planning

Help chart the course for LWVIL advocacy in the coming biennium. What issues do you think should be prioritized? Make sure your voice is heard by participating in YOUR League's Program Planning process!

The LWVIL Issues and Advocacy committee uses local League Program Planning input to develop the state's advocacy priorities, or Program Foci, for the coming biennium. The state Program is one of the many items delegates will vote on during Convention.

Find and review the Program Planning materials on the LWVIL website [For Members>League Resources](#) page, scroll down to Program Planning.

Education opportunities

Ranked Choice Voting

Wednesday, February 8

7–8:30 pm

by LWV of Highland Park-Highwood

[Registration required](#) for zoom program

Mary Lou's Place: YWCA's Emergency Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence

Thursday, February 9

Noon–1:00 pm

by LWV of Evanston

[Registration required](#) for zoom program

Expand League impact, educate voters statewide

Zoom helps us take our work to all corners of Illinois. **Expand your audience** and elevate our mission to empower voters and defend democracy.

Share your League's education events on the LWVIL website calendar. Submit events on the LWVIL website [News & Events>Event Calendar](#) page.

Thank you for supporting our work to defend democracy and empower voters.



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