

DEMOCRACY



WORKS

SPRING | 2020



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Executive Director

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF CALIFORNIA

4 | FORGED IN FIRE. STANDING STRONG
100 YEARS LATER.



Nichole Becker Reeve and Dylan Reeve cast her ballot at the Sierra 2 Center Vote Center.

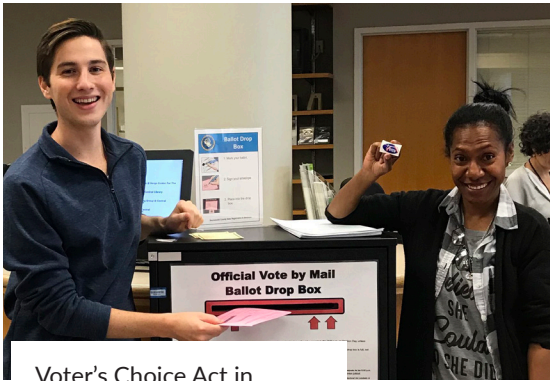


Poll worker Judy Kreizenbeck helps Mimi Hoang cast her ballot at the Sierra 2 Vote Center on March 3, 2020.



Women Power the Vote

Voters from across California came out in force on Election Day, March 3, 2020. Our volunteer photographer, Joan Cusick, captured these special voting moments at the new Sierra 2 Vote Center in Sacramento, California.



Voter's Choice Act in Action! Taken at the Downtown Sacramento Library.

Justine Pojanowski-Todd brought her baby daughter to a Sacramento Vote Center on March 3, 2020.



SPRING 2020

Direct Line



Carol Moon Goldberg
Board President

I am always wowed by the energy of the early League that undertook the job of educating 20 million new female voters on why and how to vote, while simultaneously using their newly acquired power to engage with legislators on vital issues.

One of the earliest national legislative priorities for the newly created League of Women Voters was the support of the Cable Act of 1922. Also called the Married Woman Independent Nationality Act, this bill changed a law that resulted in women's loss of citizenship when American women married foreign-born men. Need it to be said that American born men who married foreign-born women did not lose American citizenship?

In one fell swoop, League took on the outdated idea that a woman is merely an extension of her husband and restored citizenship and the right to vote. Sadly, even the Cable Act did not change the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act that prevented Chinese laborers from immigrating to the US and excluded Chinese nationals from eligibility for United States citizenship.

The early California League also jumped into advocacy. In 1923, the LWVC supported legislation that allowed a wife to control the inheritance of half of the marital community property in her will.

Thumbing through the list of 32 LWVC Action Policies and Positions, I see the energy of past League members in grappling with, and reaching consensus on vital issues in government, social policy, and natural resources. They created a sound basis for League advocacy. I see that energy translated into advocating for legislation and ballot propositions. The result of that energy yielded things like the Citizens Redistricting Commission and will yield the reform of Prop 13 when Schools and Communities First passes.

When I see the energy and the passion involved in League advocacy I see the next 100 years taking shape. The League has accomplished so much but there is still much to be done to perfect democracy. Here's to the future success of League advocacy!



Stephanie Doute
Executive Director

I have just completed my first three months as your new Executive Director of the state League. In those short months, we held Centennial celebrations, launched and managed Voter's Edge for the primaries, created and published the Easy Voter Guide, supported the primary election, ran a voter service phone hotline for the public, advanced our advocacy priorities at the Capitol, and so much more. It has been a busy time! And now, we suddenly find ourselves at an inflection point. Between the stock market drop and COVID-19, we are on the leading edge of a global crisis that requires steady leadership, caution without panic, the nimbleness to work in times where nothing is business as usual, and deep compassion for each other.

The work we all do to empower voters and defend democracy is critical in California. We have the Census, redistricting, a heavy legislative agenda, and the November election ahead of us. We are taking lessons learned from the primary to support more effective implementation of the Voter's Choice Act in relevant counties. More broadly, we are working closely with the Secretary of State's office, elections officials, and coalition partners to determine the best path forward for the general election. And, we must do all of this while caring for ourselves and others with our greatest humanity. As we navigate the rapidly evolving COVID-19 public health situation, we will be pushing forward in new ways to get the job done.

We are fortunate enough to live in a time where technology is the great facilitator. We are leveraging video conferencing tools, video streaming, interactive digital media and other tools to keep advancing our mission while allowing League members, leaders, partners, and staff to care for themselves and their loved ones. League members are leaders in every community that you serve. Your steadfast leadership and concern for the people in our diverse state will be crucial to helping all of our communities move forward with a steady hand. Please reach out to us at the LWVC if you need guidance or support in finding the paths and tools to carry on with your work.

Thank you for all that you do. Together, we will move forward to empower voters and defend democracy in California. Take care of yourselves and each other.

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LWVC Staff & Board: Rosie Venegas, Sharon Stone, Karen Jones, Carol Moon Goldberg, Stephanie Doute, Amaris LeBron, Elizabeth Leslie

Forged in fire. Standing strong 100 years later.

The League was honored on the floor of the California State Assembly on February 14, 2020 by Assembly—member Laura Friedman (D-43, Glendale) who remarked:

“One hundred years ago, the founders of the League of Women Voters of California were beaten, jailed, and tortured in their movement to give women the right to vote- to be enfranchised in shaping the laws and policies governing their lives.

Today, the League of Women Voters of California is still fighting for voting rights, fairly mapped districts, and equitable policies and systems.

It is our privilege to honor the League of Women Voters of California for 100 years of collaborative, bipartisan work as they head into the next centennial defending democracy and empowering voters.”



(Photo by Joan Cusick)

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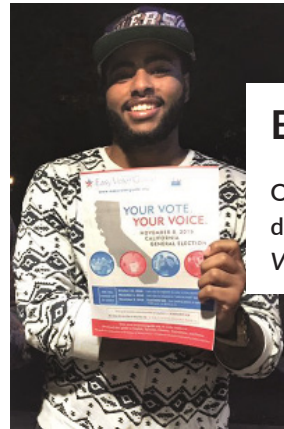
2020 Primary Election Impact

The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund build public participation in our democracy and strives to create a more representative government. Ballots are still being counted but here are some highlights about of recent election work:



Voter's Edge

Our online guide was viewed by over 486K Californians and 1,615 candidates participated.



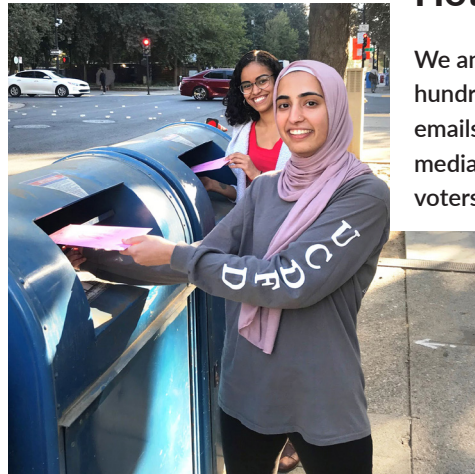
Easy Voter Guide

Our local Leagues and libraries distributed over 10,000 *Easy Voter Guides* in five languages.



LWVCEF

Our Ed Fund website cavotes.org reached over 158K people seeking answers to their voting questions.



Hotline

We answered hundreds of calls, emails, and social media inquiries from voters across our state.



**DONATE
YOUR RIDE TODAY!
IT'S EASY 855-500-7433**
cavotes.org/auto

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#SHEISME Member Profile

Mony Flores-Bauer, Powering the Vote in Spanish-Speaking Communities

In 2020, we celebrate 100 years of League work through the inter-generational stories of our members as part of our [She is Me campaign](#). We sat down with one of our long-time members to talk about powering the vote in Spanish-speaking communities. Meet Mony Flores-Bauer.

Emelina “Mony” Flores was born in Orange County, California, the daughter of immigrant parents from Chihuahua, Mexico. At a young age, Mony’s family instilled in her the importance of responsibility and community. Her parents attended community college to learn English, become United States citizens, and have their three sons become naturalized citizens. Her family believed that interaction with the government meant to assimilate, to get an education and a secure job. Mony didn’t grow up around a culture of voting, but she watched her parents and brothers build their lives as new American citizens, starting families and owning businesses while retaining their cultural values. After graduating high school with honors, Mony earned academic scholarships that took her to Rancho Santiago Community College and California State University, Fullerton.

Mony’s career and marriage brought her to start a new life in the Bay Area in 1978. In the late ’80s, a politically active friend asked Mony to join the League of Women Voters of Oakland. At the time, Mony was volunteering in local politics, but her true calling was reaching people who didn’t understand the election process.

“I became really interested in the nonpartisan work of the League because I had enough of partisan politics,” emphasized Mony. “The League was welcoming, inclusive, and interested in reaching underrepresented people,” she added.

During her 40 years as a member, Mony has held many roles, including LWV Oakland President, LWVC Voter Service Director, LWVCEF Spanish Translation Advisor, and member of the LWVUS Nominating Committee.

Also, Mony is the Spanish spokesperson for the LWVC and trains others to reach Spanish-speaking audiences in their own communities. Mony’s collaborative work establishing voter education partnerships with Spanish-language media—including Univision-TV SF, Radio Bilingue, Hecho en California radio along with Mi Pueblo Foods—reached tens of millions of Californians in their native language, introducing many of them to the League for the first time.

Today, Mony uses herself as an example of someone who learned the importance of civic participation outside the home—an experience that makes her Spanish voter education workshops successful.

Mony understands not everyone grew up with voting as a norm. “I am committed to do all I

can to encourage civic participation using League resources,” said Mony. “I know the challenges Spanish speakers face. The League has worked hard to build grassroots power, and now we are using that energy to power the vote among people new to the voting process.”

Understanding the experiences and needs of new voters is crucial as the League moves into its second century. “Diversity has been an evolving and revealing path. Recent actions by our national, state, and local Leagues to commit to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion are inspiring the next transformative chapter in our organization. Recognizing diversity, equity, and inclusion as not only a policy but an active practice means we recognize the importance of promoting equitable environments and reducing barriers to participation,” said Mony.

Mony sees the League’s essential role in the next 100 years as continuing to protect democracy. “Technology will change and the electorate will be more diverse, but engaging voters face-to-face will always be key to civic engagement,” she said.

The League has been a cherished part of Mony’s life, and she anticipates what is coming next. “For over 40 years, the League has opened the doors for many defining moments in my life,” said Mony. “I’ve had the opportunity to represent the League across the country and in Mexico, Chile, and Venezuela. I’m looking forward to working with the next generation of women powering the vote.”

Mony works as an independent consultant and devotes her volunteer time to her local League in Oakland and to the LWVUS Nominating Committee. She enjoys travelling with her husband, Bruce and being a beloved Tia (Aunt).

Find out more about the She is Me Campaign.

www.lwvc.org/sheisme





Legislative Update



It's very early in the 2020 legislative session, but we are already hard at work on a number of issues including housing, elections, the death penalty, racial justice, and voting rights.

The year kicked off with a big push to pass SB 50, the More Homes Act, legislation to address the state's housing deficit by incentivizing dense construction near jobs and transit. Although the bill failed, the League remains committed to supporting future measures that will increase housing production while minimizing displacement, maximizing affordable housing, and mitigating against commute-related pollution that causes climate change.

In February, we worked closely with the Secretary of State and California elections officials to pass SB 207, an urgency bill that went into effect immediately. This bill simplifies the process by which voters update their address or political party preference in the two weeks before and including Election Day, encouraging more voters to participate in the presidential primary election and making it easier for them to cast a ballot for their preferred candidate.

The League is a founding member of the new California Anti-Death Penalty Coalition. On March 11, the coalition convened in Sacramento to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the moratorium on executions and lobby for the

newly-introduced Racial Justice Act (RJA), AB 2200, authored by Assemblyperson Ash Kalra. The League is co-sponsoring this groundbreaking legislation to expand California's civil rights laws by prohibiting racial discrimination in convictions and sentences, and creating a process to challenge it at trial or following conviction.

Through the Free the Vote Act, we continue to work to restore voting rights to Californians who are on parole. Felony disenfranchisement, when paired with persistent racial inequities in arrest and sentencing, serves to dilute the voting strength of communities of color. Right now there are 50,000 people on parole—living, working, and paying taxes in our communities, who are denied a voice and meaningful representation. Restoring those rights is the new face of the suffrage movement.

As a state constitutional amendment, the Free the Vote Act requires a two-thirds vote by the legislature and then goes on the November 2020 ballot as an initiative for voters to decide. There are always opportunities to get involved and follow your passion with the League. Check out the broad array of positions we cover online at lwvc.org and let us know if you would like to volunteer to help follow and analyze legislation. If you enjoy working collaboratively, our committees on climate change, water resources, and housing and homelessness are open to new membership. Send us a note at advocacy@lwvc.org if you would like to be part of

Ways to Help

Your support allows us to advocate and educate at the state level. Call (916) 442-7215 x104 or email dalexander@lwvc.org for more information.

Make a Donation Online

Supporting LWVC during this crucial time is more important than ever. Make a donation online at lwvc.org/Donate

Become A Monthly Donor

Becoming a monthly donor gives us a voice. Together we can ensure elections are free, fair, accessible and reduce the influence of money in our elections. Become a monthly donor at lwvc.org/monthly.

Donate A Vehicle

Vehicles, boats, and RV's can be donated to the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund. It's easy, call 855-500-7433 or cavotes.org/auto.

Honor A Loved One

Send a card to someone you care about in honor of a birthday, in memory of someone's life, or for any special reason. More at lwvc.org/tribute.

Consider Stock, Bonds Or Mutual Funds

Making a gift of stocks, bonds, or other securities allows you to make an immediate impact on our efforts to protect democracy. Visit lwvc.org/stocks for more info.



League of Women Voters of California Honor Wall

Our Honor Wall pays tribute to those who dedicated their lives fighting for the values of the League of Women Voters of California and changing the world through their work.

Donations given in memory of those on this wall celebrates the work of the past 100 years while ensuring that the League of Women Voters of California can steadfastly build on their contributions for the next 100 years.

When you donate to honor a person on this wall, we will send a card to the honoree's family.

To add someone to the wall or to donate in honor of a member visit lwvc.org/honor.