



EnviroCivics

Climate, Communities, and Democracy



State Convention
Lafayette, Louisiana
March 4-5, 2023

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Schedule of Events

Saturday, March 4, 2023

- 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Registration and Breakfast
Bayou Vermilion District / Vermilionville Performance Center
- 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Welcome and League Reports
LWV of Louisiana, Hilda Walker Thomas
LWV of Caddo-Bossier, Gisele Proby-Bryant
LWV of Lafayette, Kathleen Schott Espinoza
LWV of New Orleans, Rosalind Blanco Cook
LWV of St. Tammany, DeVoe Allen
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. First Plenary Session (See separate schedule)
- 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. *Lunch and Presentation from LWWUS Staff*
- 1:30 – 2:45 p.m. **Workshop: EnviroCivics, Climate, Communities and Democracy**
Moderator: M. Christian Green
Keynote Speaker:
Colette Pichon Battle, Vision & Initiatives Partner, Taproot Earth
Keynote Presentation:
Andrew Jacoby, Environmental Lawyer, Law Firm of Andrew Jacoby LLC
- 2:45 – 3:00 p.m. Question and Answer Period for Speakers
- 3:00 – 3:15 p.m. *Break*
- 3:15 – 4:30 p.m. **Educators Panel: EnviroCivics and Education on Climate, Environment, and Democracy:**
Leigh Dupuy, Bayou Vermilion District
Lauralee LeBlanc, Teaching Responsible Environmental Education (T.R.E.E.)
Roishetta Ozane, The Vessel Project of Louisiana
- 4:30 – 5:00 p.m. **Government Official:**
Commissioner Davante Lewis, Louisiana Public Service Commission
- 5:00 – 5:15 p.m. *Transport to hotel*
- 5:15 – 6:30 p.m. *Break*
- 6:30 – 6:45 p.m. *Transport to Vermilionville*
- 6:30 – 7:00 p.m. Cash Bar and Banquet
Bayou Vermilion District Performance Center
Banquet speaker: **General Russel Honoré**
- 8:45 – 9:00 p.m. *Transport to Hotel*

Sunday, March 5, 2023

- 8:00 – 8:30 a.m. Light breakfast, Bayou Vermilion District Performance Center
8:30 – 8:45 a.m. In Memoriam and Acknowledgements
8:45 – Noon Second Plenary Session (see separate schedule)

Proposed Order of Business, First Plenary Session

Saturday, March 4, 2023

- 11:00 a.m. – Noon Call to Order, Hilda Walker Thomas
- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Appointment of Parliamentarian: | Donna Howland |
| Appointment of Secretaries: | Ellen Torgrimson |
| Appointment of Election Committee: | Susan Bettinger |
| Appointment of Minutes Committee: | Gisele Proby-Byrant |
| Credentials Report: | Rosalind Blanco Cook |
| Adoption of Rules of Convention: | Gail Ledet |
| Adoption of Order of Business: | Jan Harrison |
| Treasurer’s Report: | Carol DeVille |
| Budget Committee Report: | Carol DeVille |
| By-Laws Committee Report: | Alfred Doucette, Jr. |
| Program Committee Report: | Carol DeVille |
| Non-Board Recommended Proposals: | Bonnie Schmidt |
| Nominating Committee Report: | Wendy King |
| Introduction of Nominees: | Ellen Torgrimson |
| Nominations from the Floor: | Hilda Walker Thomas |
- Announcements

Proposed Order of Business, Second Plenary Session

Sunday, March 5, 2023

- 8:45 – 10:15 a.m. Call to Order: Hilda Walker Thomas
- Budget Report Discussion and Vote
- By-Laws Report Discussion and Vote
- Program Report Discussion and Vote

Non-Board Recommended Proposals Discussion and Vote

Election of LWVLA Board of Directors and Nominating Committee

10:15 – 10:30 a.m. *Break to Cast Ballots/Vote*

10:30 a.m. – Noon Announcement of Ballot Results

Farewell to Retiring State Officers and Board Members

Welcome and Introduction of new LWVLA Board

Address by new LWVLA President

12:00 Noon Motion to adjourn

Welcome and League Reports

Welcome, Hilda Walker Thomas

The League of Women Voters of Louisiana (LWVLA) welcomes League members and guests to the 2023 Convention. We are happy that you are here in Lafayette to help celebrate 80 years of the League of Women Voters in Louisiana. At this convention, we will be emphasizing Climate, Communities, and Democracy.

LWVLA consists of four local leagues: Caddo-Bossier, Lafayette, St. Tammany, and New Orleans. The LWV operates on three levels – national, state, and local – and members are encouraged to participate at all three levels.

League of Women Voters of Louisiana, Hilda Walker Thomas

The mission of the LWVLA is to encourage informed and active participation in government, to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. We have seven standing committees that follow Louisiana legislation and governmental activities and policies in specific areas. We also follow developments in the budgeting process at the Louisiana Legislature.

During 2021 and 2022, LWVLA continued its work on the LWVUS' People Powered Fair Maps redistricting project, as detailed in the Voting Rights Committee report below. Other special projects included the Pro-Democracy/Voting Rights Project and the LWVUS Power the South Tour, which made a stop in New Orleans.

For the Pro-Democracy/Voting Rights Project LWVLA entered into a contract with LWVUS to undertake programming with the aim of promoting democracy reform through federal legislation action and public engagement. LWVLA used this project to increase the League's capacity to build and sustain effective social movements; build state capacity to advance the League's policy goals including voter protection, democracy, and election reform; and build programs that incorporate transformational elements including Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and initiative goals that support long-term sustainability and further the campaign for Making Democracy Work.

The purpose of the Power the South Tour was to provide training development that teaches League leaders and partners new skills to be used to further the work. Attendees at the event gained critical knowledge to perform their duties and responsibilities as leaders and were provided innovative techniques that help boost member and volunteer recruitment and engagement.

Social Media

Communicate with LWVLA through the following social media platforms:

Website www.lwvofla.org

Facebook LWVofLA

Twitter LWVLouisiana

Email President@lwvofla.org

The LWVLA follows developments in the budgeting process at the Louisiana Legislature and it has standing committees that follow Louisiana legislation and governmental activities and policies in seven specific areas: criminal justice; diversity, equity and inclusion; education; environment; healthcare; voting rights; voter services; and women's issues. Reports from these committees follow.

LWVLA Criminal Justice Committee, Joanna Pettit

In mid-2016, with data drawn from a system assessment by Pew Charitable Trusts, the Justice Reinvestment Task Force, a high-level, inter-branch, bipartisan group, began its charge of analyzing the drivers of Louisiana's "highest-in-the-world" prison population in order "to chart a data-driven course for comprehensive reform." The result in 2017 was a 10-bill legislative package supported by Governor John Bel Edwards, legislators of both parties, numerous advocacy organizations and hundreds of ordinary citizens. The goals of these Justice Reinvestment Initiative bills were to: focus prison space on people who pose a serious threat to public safety; strengthen community supervision; clear away barriers to successful reentry; and reinvest a substantial portion of the savings into services that would reduce recidivism and support the victims of crime.

Data from the 2021 Justice Reinvestment Reforms Annual Performance Report indicate that Louisiana is on target to meet those major goals. Louisiana's prison population has declined, sentence lengths for nonviolent offenses have decreased, the use of habitual offender enhancement has decreased, and the average probation and parole officer caseload has decreased. The state has realized a total accumulated savings of approximately \$114.8 million attributable to JRI, and those savings have been reinvested into the State General Fund, juvenile justice programs, victims' services, community-based programs, and other initiatives designed to reduce recidivism.

In spite of these measurable successes, there have been numerous attempts in the legislature to roll back or weaken the reforms of 2017. Most have failed. But concern remains that the political climate for advancing reforms or holding onto the gains is different in 2023 than it was in 2017, whether due to a change in the makeup of the legislature, a perception by citizens that violent crime has increased, or the stubborn resistance by the law enforcement side to any sort of reform.

The LWVLA Criminal Justice Committee continues its work with coalitions and advocacy partners, including Voice of the Experienced (VOTE), the Promise of Justice Initiative (PJI), and the Louisiana Center for Children's Rights. To coordinate and amplify their efforts, these organizations increasingly work together as part of larger coalitions. PJI, for example, has recently formed a coalition to work on unanimous jury retroactivity following U.S. Supreme Court rulings that did not grant retroactive relief to some 1,500 Louisianans convicted by non-

unanimous juries. And recently the Criminal Justice Committee and the litigation team at LWVUS worked with VOTE to simplify the voter registration process for people with criminal convictions.

Unfortunately, despite clear evidence that the reforms are working as intended, Louisiana's status as the state with the highest incarceration rate has only improved marginally since 2017.

LWVLA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, Donna Howland

The DEI Committee is a new one, formed in 2021. Initial activities included:

- Participated in Zoom meeting sponsored by the LWV Greater Tucson on the topic "Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation."
- Letter to the Editor published in the January 20, 2023 edition of the Times Picayune/ The Advocate: "Challenges keep some from enjoying Mardi Gras parades." Highlighted inequalities for people with physical disabilities to fully participate in the culture of Louisiana.
- Outreach to "Our Voice Nuestra Voz" - a local non-profit organization dedicated to a world where Black and Brown people live with dignity and equity. Met with the Executive Director Mary Moran and Program Director Taylor Castillo on Sept. 26, 2022. Introduced them to our work and promoted the use of VOTE 411.

LWVLA Education Committee, DeVoe Allen

The education committee followed the progress of numerous bills in the Louisiana Legislature during the 2022 regular legislative session. We chose relevant bills to follow through the My Legis website. Efforts were coordinated with Together Louisiana. Members identified bills to follow and divided bills between the organizations taking part in Together Louisiana. LWVLA followed bills concerning teaching African-American history, prohibiting the state from recommending vaccines or medications in schools, and allowing school funding to follow a student directly through an Educational Savings Account funded by the state. Information was entered into a chart that could be viewed online.

The Education Committee contacted state legislators and senators who served on the committees that sponsored each bill. We utilized telephone calls, emails, and attempted to schedule face to face meetings. Together Louisiana members from all parts of the state took part in the effort.

Local league members followed the activities of their parish school boards. They attended school board meeting to advocate for League goals and positions. Voter Services created guides that allowed school board candidates to state their positions on local issues.

Results of League advocacy were mixed. We will continue to follow the state of education in Louisiana.

LWVLA Environment Committee, Wendy King

The LWVLA state Environmental Committee, during 2019-2021, monitored Louisiana state legislature's environment and natural resources bills, and reported to LWVLA on the bills and how they related to LWVLA positions.

During 2019-2021, LWVLA Environmental Committee Chair Wendy King became an active member of Together Louisiana/Together New Orleans and has informed LWVLA of legislative issues and bills that TLA/TNO has worked on and that concern LWV positions on the environment.

LWVLA Healthcare Committee, Patrice Sentino

In 2021, longtime former chair Linda Hawkins resigned as Chair of the committee, and Dr. Patrice Sentino stepped up to assume the role. Activities of the committee over 2021-2022 included the following:

- Participated in LWVUS -Health Care Reform for the US (HCR4US) network group focusing on a change in group leadership with the new focus on Single Payer healthcare, which limits participation opportunities for our state.
- Dr. Sentino was appointed to the Louisiana Department of Insurance (DOI) Louisiana Health Care Commission (LHCC) in 2022. Attended quarterly in-person meetings in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the LDI Annual Conference, and the 2022 Health Summit: Pathways through Policy for Equitable Recovery (Explore pathways to equitable recovery, renewal, and resilience to move Louisiana forward).
- Legislative/legislation - Monitored/listened to legislative meetings and identified healthcare legislative Bills throughout the 2021- 2022 legislative session.
- The league and partners fought against limiting availability and access to healthcare in Louisiana, affordability and the rising cost of healthcare. Additional advocacy included Medicaid coverage/expansion, women's reproductive rights, nursing homes, and emergency preparedness.
- The league healthcare coalition and partnerships: participated in zoom meetings with Legislative Agenda for Women (LAW): Healthcare/Medicaid focus, Access to Care Coalition (A2C), Purpose & Scope: The coalition consists of community-based and statewide nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups, healthcare providers & stakeholders Mission: Improve access to health care & focusing on defending Medicaid Program & budget, and LWVUS - Health Care Reform for the US, and Collaborative to End Institutional Racism in Louisiana.
- Zoom meetings - Louisiana Department of Insurance (DOI) Louisiana Health Care Commission (LHCC) subcommittees: Availability and Access to Healthcare in Louisiana and the Affordability and the Rising Cost of Healthcare committees.

LWVLA Voter Services Committee, Sylvia Johnson

Voter services are core to the mission of the League. Each year state and local Leagues in Louisiana publish online voters' guides, register thousands of new voters, and participate in get-out-the-vote efforts.

For the November 2022 election, LWVLA incorporated technologically advancements in the VOTE411 voters' guide to facilitate more easily the access of Louisiana citizens to information on statewide and multi-parish candidates. Committee members collaborated with volunteers in the development of the candidates' questions and in uploading the response from the candidates in preparation for a launch of information available to the public before early voting began. Local Leagues in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and in the Parishes of Lafayette and St. Tammany published candidate guides for local offices.

To educate new voters, LWVLA issued a press release with voter registration information, and committee member Christy Green coordinated with Louisiana library officials for the dissemination of posters and voting registration information to the public.

LWVLA Voting Rights Committee, M. Christian Green

The 2021-2022 period was exceptionally busy for the Voting Rights Committee (VRC), particularly with the Redistricting 2022 process falling under its umbrella. Much of the work of the VRC on both redistricting and voting rights issues was undertaken with a statewide coalition of approximately 17 groups. The formal name for that coalition is the Louisiana Election Strategies Task Force (ESTF), and it is primarily led by the Legal Defense Fund, with organizational participation by the ACLU, ADL, Campaign Legal Center, Fair Elections Center, Power Coalition for Equity Justice, SPLC, Voice of the Experienced (V.O.T.E.) and other voting rights groups. LWVLA has also occasionally sought the advice of the LWVUS Litigation Advocacy and Legislative Advocacy teams for advice in this work. The LWVLA's work on redistricting also received significant and substantial support from the LWVUS People Power Fair Maps (PPFM) campaign, of which the LWVLA was a participating state.

I. Redistricting

In May 2021, the VRC worked with the ESTF on several coalition letters to the legislature and governor during Fall 2021 and early Winter 2022. Also in Fall 2021 and early Winter 2022, LWV members testified at redistricting "roadshow" hearings in Shreveport, Lafayette, Alexandria, Slidell, New Orleans, and the Louisiana Capitol, monitoring other sessions virtually up to the start of the Legislative Redistricting Session.

The thrust of the letters, testimony and the coalition redistricting effort was to argue for the creation of additional majority-minority districts at the congressional, state legislative, and state Supreme Court levels, to better reflect and represent the 33% of the Louisiana population who are Black. LWVLA's efforts included #OperationCandyheart, which was a mailing to each legislator of League-stamped, bright blue-enveloped, letters accompanied by three Valentine conversation hearts, each emblazoned with bespoke voting rights and redistricting statements (LWV, PPFM, Fair Maps, Redist 2022, etc.). The tweet about this on the LWVLA Twitter feed

drew the attention and admiration of LWVUS, which awarded LWVLA a grant of \$4,000 to fund a series of digital candy-themed advertisements in The Advocate newspapers.

When it comes to actual redistricting, the LWV's preparation and advocacy was more gratifying than the outcome. The legislature produced a congressional map that voting rights advocates deemed to be racially gerrymandered. That map was litigated in court, on behalf of plaintiffs and the ESTF coalition by the nonpartisan Legal Defense Fund and by the Democracy Docket, which is a Democratic Party-affiliated organization. After a successful initial ruling and a special session on redistricting in June 2022, which ended with no revised map, a U.S. Supreme Court ruling resulted in the case being appended to a similar case on congressional maps that was pending out of Alabama. This was the case of *Merrill v. Milligan*, the oral argument in which was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court on October 4, 2022. At the time of this writing, no decision has been issued in that case.

Notably, despite our fruitless efforts, LWVUS awarded LWV of Louisiana a trophy as one of the states that participated in the People Powered Fair Maps campaign from 2019-2020. Our redistricting efforts may not have borne fruit at our legislature – but they did not go unnoticed.

II. Voting Rights and Election Protection

Christy Green testified in person and submitted email testimony on more than a dozen bills affecting voting rights and elections in the 2021 legislative session. Several bills opposed by LWVLA passed but were vetoed by Governor Edwards. Successful bills supported by LWVLA included legislation to increase the amount of time that voters have to complete a ballot and expand the early voting period in presidential election years, streamline the process by which formerly incarcerated people may register to vote, and provide for a longer time to prepare and count absentee ballots prior to election day.

The 2022 legislative session featured many bills on voting rights and elections. There were some twists and turns with bills being substituted and reintroduced, with a number of bills, such as high school voter registration, that became vague. LWVLA-supported several bills that failed, including ones to provide postage paid envelopes for absentee by mail ballots and to expand early voting, with extra attention to long distances in rural areas. Task forces were created to study issues of interest to LWVLA: one to study ways to increase early voting, with particular emphasis on rural communities, and another to address access for disabled voters.

III. Emerging Issues

Young Voters: The high school voter registration bill passed to become Act 624, but it has given rise to problems of interpretation that now threaten young voter registration. The LWV-Lafayette chapter was denied permission to do the high school voter registration that it had done in public schools for a decade (with a two-year COVID hiatus). Matters were further complicated by a controversial high school voter registration event in East Baton Rouge Parish. SOS guidance on the Act is problematic in several ways, and LWVLA is working with the LWVUS Litigation Advocacy Team and the Fair Elections Center to address the issue.

Closed Party Primaries: This issue seemed to have died in the Louisiana legislature in 2021, but a movement is afoot, particularly in the Southern States group at LWVUS, to have full study and

resolution on the issue. LWVUS has been careful to state that the League currently takes no national position on the issue.

Purchase of New Voting Systems: The work of the Voting Systems Commission remains inconclusive. The entire Commission proceeding was ridden with election deniers, who continue to have a strong voice in the state, with considerable influence by outside actors. The election security skeptics still champion hand-marked paper ballots over any sort of computerized voting, even as the disability rights community raises problems with hand-marked paper ballots. Our voting machines are old; they eventually need to be replaced, and we may want to work closely with disabled voter advocates to have the most beneficial effects here.

LWVLA Women's Issues Committee, Rosalind Blanco Cook

During 2021-2022 the Women's issues committee conducted many activities related to women and families:

- Women on Wednesdays, Zoom meetings
- Office of Women's Health Leadership Team – press conference in conjunction with the 100 anniversary of women's voting rights; webinar
- Office of Women's Health Leadership Team – years long effort to establish Louisiana Office of Women's Health
- Structured standard indicators for women's quality of life indicators
- Efforts to make the public aware of Office of Women's Health
- Meeting with Louisiana Department of Health (LDH)
- Conference calls: Legislative Agenda for Women (LAW); priority issues: economic security (equal pay; paid sick and family leave); support a living wage: health care issues; preventing violence against women
- NOW LOVE group – participated on a Zoom panel about the vote
- Interview on The Vote: Louisiana Women Lead, WYES – along with Sybil Morial; Sen. Mary Landrieu; Supreme Court Bernette Joshua Johnson; former state Representative Julie Stokes; Mary Zervigon and the Historic New Orleans Collection curator and historian Eric Seiferth – part of the PBS documentary series

League of Women Voters of Caddo-Bossier, Gisele Proby-Bryant

January 12, 2021-December 2021 (Redistricting maps will be finalized Feb. 2022)

Program sponsored in collaboration with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Shreveport Alumnae Chapter. Louisiana Redistricting Process. Redistricting - It Matters via Zoom and Facebook Live. Community Stakeholders participated: President Hilda Thomas, Joyce Corrington (Redistricting PowerPoint), State Representative Sam Jenkins, Caddo Commissioner Story Gage

Watts and Dr. Gary Joiner, LSUS Professor and demographer. Opportunity to raise awareness and educate citizens around redistricting. Attorney Felicia Hamilton served as moderator and Gisele and Lois co-chairs. The presentation was well attended by stakeholders at every level. Received great reviews and for our work the program was featured in the Southwest Blaze Magazine that is available to 1000 of women. Susan Caldwell supported the Zoom platform.

March - December 2021

Basecamp is our PPFM Project Management Tool which houses all of our project communications and resources. Gisele Proby-Bryant participated in a team model weekly and sometimes more frequently in support of Redistricting. Additionally, weekly [Redistricting Champions Learning Basecamp Webinar Presentation and recording](#) were also presented weekly.

April 2021

League sponsored the Redistricting | Power Mapping, Spring Powerful Program update on all the political issues that we will actively engage in for the remainder of the year. Louisiana Legislative Session, Census Update, Redistricting, BESE Elections and Bring Back Louisiana Campaign.

LWVLA Board/Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs/ PPFM and Pro-Democracy Voting Rights Working Group

May 2021

The LWVLA will host a virtual Watch Party on Saturday, May 1, 2021, 10:00 AM to view *Line in the Street* via Zoom.

League of Women Voters of Louisiana Virtual National Day of Action Webinar People Powered Fair Maps

LA LWV opposed HB 586, a bill to abolish the state public defender board. The 11-member board has jurisdiction over 39 public defenders, and it passed by a vote of 70-12.

June 2021

Attorney Felicia Hamilton will take the stage to celebrate the observance of the first Juneteenth National Holiday @ "Let the Good Times Roll" festival where she will perform the Black National Anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" at the opening on Friday. Additionally, members will support the free health and legal clinics on Saturday. We will Get-Out-the-Vote through education and registration. One of the original freedom riders, a Shreveport native – David Dennis, would be speaking for Juneteenth.

August 2021

History Center virtual program: Member viewed Beauty and the Ballot Box highlighting Women's Equality Day, on the 101st Anniversary of 19th Amendment.

September 2021

Louisiana October 9, 2021 Election has been rescheduled to November 13, 2021

Members supported more than 900 Hurricane Ida evacuees in Shreveport

Redistricting Roadshow Northwest Louisiana LSUS (PPFM testimonies given by Gisele Proby-Bryant and Susan Bettinger).

National Voter Registration Day (virtually) September 28th

October 2021

Redistricting Webinar: Together Baton Rouge

<http://www.togetherla.org/>

State Representatives: Royce Duplessis, Randall Gaines, Ashley Shelton of the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, Alanah Odoms of the ACLU of Louisiana, Stephen Kearny of Fair Districts Louisiana, Michael Pernick of the NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund, Terry Landry, Jr., of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Peter Robins-Brown of Louisiana Progress

Indigenous Peoples Day, Guest Speaker Sonya Bratlie, a member of the Choctaw nation, reminding us of President Biden's acknowledgment and recognition of today as Indigenous Peoples Day. Ms. Bratlie spoke passionately about the deep-rooted history of native peoples and their struggles to retain their culture and to teach their children the truth, retain their language as well as the remaining lands they have.

November 2021

John Ratcliff member of the Shreveport Commission on Race established by Mayor Perkins. He offered that oppression exists along many lines in our community – race, gender and so on. Along with Omari Ho Sang and Adrienne Critcher, John worked out three pillars to help move the conversation forward in addressing issues – 1) an accurate and complete history, 2) accurate information on where we are now, and 3) accurate statistics and non-statistical analysis.

December 2021

Celebration Time Come On! Caddo Bossier reached a milestone that deserves a celebration. Our 1st in-person meeting since March 2020-yeah! A Christmas Fellowship @ Carrabba's chaired by Judge Sheva Sims and Attorney Felicia Hamilton was absolutely wonderful. Good food, fellowship and a ton of fun. Thank God for His Faithfulness and protecting our unit members and many of our families through these challenging times.

January 2022

LWVLA Special Called Meeting on Redistricting Position (4 members attended the Zoom Meeting)

Council Member Levette Fuller, District B – City of Shreveport Redistricting Plan overview.

Councilwoman Fuller also shared the impact of the passing of Proposition 1 in December 2021 in support of first responders.

Caddo Bossier requested governmental bodies: City of Shreveport Council, Caddo Parish School Board and Caddo Parish Commission via a letter to requested redistricting information: timelines, proposed maps, public meetings, etc.

February 2022

Black History Month Program

Speaker - Dr. Emma Sheperd, Caddo Bossier member | Topic: Diversity - An Integral Part of Democracy

Election Dates Announcement for Judicial Race | Voter Education, Registration and Mobilization

Program Committee will plan to host Meet the Judicial Candidates for March meeting.

The Honorable Judge Sheva M. Sims, City Court, Division D and a member of Caddo Bossier will chair program.

Legislative Committee discussed bills pre-filed for the Louisiana Sessions that opens March 14.

March 2022

Court of Appeal Election - District includes DeSoto, Red River and most of Caddo Parish

Primary - March 26, 2022 | Early Voting Dates | March 12-19 except Sunday, March 13

Meet the Candidates for Judge, Court of Appeal 2nd Circuit |

Judge Erin Leigh Waddell Garrett | Judge Craig Marcotte

Moderator Jasmine Cooper, City of Shreveport Assistant Attorney, Caddo Bossier member

April 2022

Our Climate | How Do We Help?

Kevin Bettinger, PhD, Senior Technical Director for Climate Change, DT Global

Redistricting & LA Legislative Session Update | Gisele Proby-Bryant

Attorney Felicia Hamilton member of Caddo Bossier explains expungement & the HB proposed.

<https://www.ksla.com/2022/04/11/la-lawmakers-consider-marijuana-expungement-bill/>

June 2022

Program Planning

National Voter Registration Day Sept.

Letter submitted to the City of Shreveport Council on Redistricting and the importance of drawing fair and equitable maps

July 2022

League members attended Caddo Parish Commission Redistricting Meeting for Citizens (this supported request made in January)

Caddo Bossier LWV Voter Registration with Shreveport Job Corp (registered high school students who are interested in career ready diploma and opt not to attend 4 year institution).

September 2022

Caddo Bossier members participated and provided materials around the upcoming election and Proposed Constitutional Amendments (Nov. 8 & Dec. 10). Members registered voters using the Geaux Vote app and amplified the importance of Get-Out-the-Vote (GOTV) through the following public service: Southern Hills Business Association Expo, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Mayoral Forum and co-sponsored 10th Annual National Voter Registration Day Partnership with Delta Sigma Theta and Southern University

October 2022

PAR Overview of Constitutional Amendments | Caddo Propositions | Redistricting Ballot concerns

Secretary of State Quick Facts for Election overview reviewed

Deadline to Register In-Person Oct. 11 & Online Oct. 18

Southern Hills Neighborhood Association & League of Women Voters Mayoral Forum

Early Voting (Oct. 25-Nov. 1)

November 2022

Veterans Day Celebration members participated

Mid-Term Election – Nov. 8, 2022 Results & Run-Offs

Local, State and National Elections

December 10, 2022 General Election

Proposed Constitutional Amendments

Caddo Parish Commission Redistricting Meetings

2023 Distinguished Service Awards

Louisiana League of Women Voters State Convention 2023

December 2022

Christmas Fellowship Chat & Chew

League of Women Voters of Lafayette, Kathleen Schott-Espinoza

LWV Lafayette Year 2021 in Review

1. Communications (Ilea Pestel)
 - a. Continued updates to our new website. (Ilea Pestel)
2. Voter Services
 - a. Published a local voter guide for the Nov. 12, 2021 local tax initiatives. (Christie Maloyed)
3. Issue Advocacy, community service, and League service
 - a. Advocated for city to repair MLK, Jr. Rec. Center parking lot entrance (Christy Green)
This is the site of a new early voting space for Lafayette Parish.

- b. We continue to have an LWV Lafayette representative on the city Civil Service Board (Germaine Breaux)
- c. We hosted a virtual webinar “Redistricting from a Demographer’s Perspective: Mike Hefner”. Mr. Hefner was employed by numerous municipalities during the redistricting season to draw potential maps for adoption. (Kathleen Schott Espinoza, Christie Maloyed)
- d. Participated in state townhalls on redistricting (Christy Green)
- e. Committee to recognize Thetis Cusimano’s service to the League (Germaine Breaux)
 - i. “League of Women Voters / Thetis Cusimano Scholarship” funded and given once per year to a UL student (Germaine Breaux, Art Conner)
 - ii. Naming the annual Innovator Award in Thetis’ honor.

LWV Lafayette Year 2022 in Review (March - October)

- 1. Voter Services
 - a. Candidate forums - Both well attended
 - i. Lafayette Police Chief candidate forum co hosted with the NAACP
 - ii. City Court Judges candidate forum co hosted with Women of Wisdom and 100 Black Men
- 2. Issue Advocacy
 - a. Lobbying the Lafayette Parish Council on issues concerning the Library Board of Control. (Letter in support of inclusive book displays, and in support of careful consideration of board appointments)
 - b. Lafayette Parish School System changed its policy to not allow LWV to host voter registration drives on high school campuses. This new policy is extended to prohibit any outside groups. Representatives from the Lafayette League met with the school system superintendent and urged a reconsideration. The LPSS chose to go with guidance solicited from the Secretary of State’s office to prohibit any outside groups.
- 3. Voter Registration Drives
 - a. LWV Lafayette did host a registration drive at the University of Louisiana Lafayette’s Constitution Day
- 4. May Social at Margaret Oelkers West home where we honored the first recipient of the Thetis Cusimano Memorial scholarship.
- 5. High School Empowerment Program - ongoing. We are partnering with a civic group to provide a workshop for high school students on civic engagement.

League of Women Voters of New Orleans, Rosalind Blanco Cook / Stacey LaFleur

2021, Co-presidents Rosalind Blanco Cook and Jessie Nieblas

February 11, 2021

Virtual Mardi Gras Meeting and Celebration

July 21, 2021

Virtual Annual Meeting: Polly Guthrie scholarship awards were given to Linda Plasse from UNO and Jared Roark from SUNO.

August 17, 2021

Social Event at the Higgins Hotel, 1000 Magazine St., New Orleans, LA 70130. Attended by LWWNO members, guests, local officials, and candidates for upcoming elections.

October 1, 2021

Election Guide: LWWNO posted on their web page unedited answers to questions given to local candidates for the upcoming fall elections.

December 5, 2021

Annual Holiday Social held at Mulates, 201 Julia St. New Orleans, LA 70130

Throughout 2021

LWWNO, in conjunction with the National Council of Jewish Women, registered new citizens to vote following the Naturalization Ceremonies in New Orleans.

2022, Co-presidents Rosalind Blanco Cook and Sue Dicharry

August 13, 2022

Annual Meeting held at The Rooftop on Basin, 501 Basin St. New Orleans, LA 70112. Polly Guthrie scholarship awards were given to Ester Brown from UNO and Jon-Monet Ray from SUNO.

September 21, 2022

Election Guide: LWWNO posted on the Vote 411 web page unedited answers to questions given to local candidates for the upcoming election.

September 29, 2022

LWWNO assisted student leadership at Xavier University in registering students to vote.

October 13, 2022

LWWNO co-sponsored an online Election Forum.

December 7, 2022

Annual Holiday Social held at Crescent City Brewhouse, 527 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70112.

Throughout 2022

LWWNO, in conjunction with the National Council of Jewish Women, registered new citizens to vote following the Naturalization Ceremonies in New Orleans.

LWWNO conducted several media interviews concerning get-out-the vote efforts. In particular, LWWNO worked to educate voters distracted by Hurricane Ida about the candidates and issues on the ballot.

League of Women Voters of St. Tammany, DeVoe Allen

During 2021 and 2022, the LWV of St. Tammany completed the following activities:

- Held monthly meetings through ZOOM during the COVID-19 quarantine
- Resumed in person meetings when allowed by the CDC
- Hosted Annual Meetings
- Invited our Clerk of Court to the 2022 Annual Meeting where she discussed the safety of votes cast in our parish, as well as discussing problems related to paper ballots
- Revised the by-laws to reflect our new Leadership Team format and to update local League priorities
- Supported PPFM initiatives by
 - Attending virtual and in person meetings to discuss and promote PPFM
 - Presenting an open ZOOM meeting to educate attendees about PPFM
 - Attending ZOOM and meetings with Together Louisiana
 - Attending ZOOM and in person meetings with the POWER COALITION
 - Attending the Redistricting Roadshow in Covington: Bonnie Schmidt spoke for LWVST
 - Posting PPFM information on our website and webpage
 - Writing letters, calling, and emailing local legislators to encourage support for PPFM
- Partnered with the NAACP and Delta Theta Sigma Sorority to host a high school voter registration drive in all of the parish high schools (2019)
- Held a voter registration drive at the public libraries
- Attended a voter registration drive at the Northshore Technical School
- Provided information about candidates via questionnaires with answers posted on our website and Facebook page
- Partnered with the Abita Springs Women's Society to present a forum with candidates for office in Abita Springs (2022)
- Presented information about the State Constitutional Amendments at Christwood Retirement Community
- Posted information on our website and Facebook page outlining instructions on how, where, and when to cast votes in St. Tammany Parish
- Supported League positions and priorities by contacting local officials and attending Parish Council meetings

Speakers

Keynote Speaker: Colette Pichon Battle



Colette Pichon Battle is a generational native of Bayou Liberty, Louisiana. She founded the Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy and led the development of programming focused on equitable climate disaster recovery, global migration, community economic development and energy democracy for more than 17 years in the Gulf South. Colette now serves as the Partner of Vision & Initiatives at Taproot Earth, a global climate justice organization working for a world where all people can live, rest and thrive in the places they love. She serves on the governance council of the Southern Movement Assembly, co-chairs the national Water Equity and Climate Resilient Caucus with PolicyLink, serves on the steering committee of the Ocean Justice Forum, and is a lead architect of the 5-state, multi-issue initiative Gulf South for a Green New Deal. In 2022, Colette received the William O. Douglas Award recognizing individuals who have made outstanding use of the legal/judicial process to achieve environmental goals, particularly those with national significance.

Keynote Presentation: Andrew Jacoby



Andrew Jacoby is an environmental lawyer. He has volunteered for ten years with environmental and public health advocates on a wide variety of topics, including oilfield contamination, air pollution, lead in drinking water, aquifer protection, cancer research, sewage problems, open burning of munitions, coastal erosion, fracking, leaking underground storage tanks, solar, and historic preservation. Mr. Jacoby volunteers for the GreenARMY and the Center for Human-Environmental Research, and is on the board of the 1811 Kid Ory Historic House in LaPlace, Louisiana.

Education Panelist: Leigh Dupuy



Leigh Dupuy is an honors graduate of Delcambre High School in Vermilion Parish with an associate's degree in accounting and finance from University of Louisiana Lafayette. She has risen up the ranks at the Bayou Vermilion District as a Watershed Exhibit interpreter, Environmental Programs Coordinator, and now Director of Environmental Programs. Dupuy also serves as board member of the Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association and is strongly committed to environmental ethics and environmental advocacy.

Education Panelist: Lauralee LeBlanc



Lauralee LeBlanc is a leader at Teaching Responsible Earth Education (T.R.E.E.). Since 2016, she has been the Program Coordinator of Earthkeepers, which serves 4th grade students engaging their minds and hearts in ecology and nature's wonders. Lauralee guides an Earth Education team reaching hundreds of public school children annually. Each class experiences three days connecting with Southeast Louisiana forests and learning important concepts like interrelationships. Back at home, each student applies their knowledge and experiences to changing their behaviors including lessening their impact on our planet. Previous work includes serving as an intern for Jean Lafitte National Park, as a back-country camp counselor in Colorado, an after-school program coordinator in Maryland, and an Eco-tour Guide in the Virgin Islands.

Education Panelist: Roishetta Ozane



Roishetta Sibley Ozane is the founder of The Vessel Project of Louisiana, a small mutual aid and environmental justice organization that provides emergency assistance to our most vulnerable citizens with a barrier free approach. Roishetta is an internationally known environmental justice advocate and has spoken on stages nationally and abroad, including at COP 27 in Egypt, championing for Black, indigenous, people of color communities and the many injustices that they face. Roishetta is a member of several organizations including National Association of University Women, McNeese State University Black Alumni, and a She Leads Fellow Alum for the Power Coalition of Equity and Justice. She has won several awards including the Angel Award and Women’s Earth Alliance Accelerator. Roishetta is a single mom of 6 and her children are who she’s trying to make the world a better place for. Roishetta truly believes that no one is good until we are all good and she proves that daily through her giving heart and philanthropy.

Government Official: Commissioner Davante Lewis



Davante Lewis, a Lake Charles native, is a social justice activist who has dedicated his life to building people power throughout civic participation. Davante graduated from McNeese State University with a B.A. in Political Science and a minor in Communications. After graduation, Davante continued to be a champion for young people as a public school teacher who led programs to enhance positive behavior systems and promote positive relationships between teachers and students. Taking his advocacy beyond the classroom, Davante joined the Louisiana Budget Project as Director of Public Affairs and Outreach, becoming a leading voice in Louisiana for economic and racial justice, consumer protections, equity in education, and financial aid and student loan reforms for students. He is a sought-after speaker and consultant on policy advocacy and community engagement. In 2022 Davante was elected to the Public Service Commissioner, representing constituents from 10 Louisiana parishes, including the Baton Rouge and New Orleans greater metropolitan areas.

Banquet Speaker: Lt. General Russel L. Honoré (Ret.)



General Russel Honoré is a decorated 37-year army veteran and a global authority on leadership, disaster management, and climate preparedness. As the commander of Joint Task Force Katrina, he became known as the "Category 5 General" for his leadership in coordinating military relief efforts in post-hurricane New Orleans. General Honoré knows that the future of our national security depends on protecting our environment, and he's fighting for a brighter future for us all. A Louisiana native, he founded the GreenARMY, a coalition of environmental experts and advocates, to protect against pollution while fighting climate change and the natural disasters it causes.

Proposed Convention Rules, 2023

ADMISSION	Participation in the 2023 Convention Plenary sessions shall be limited to League members in good standing who are registered.
VOTING PRIVILEGES	All registered members in good standing are entitled to vote.
DEBATE	Delegates have the right to speak after they have identified themselves and the League to which they belong and have been recognized by the chair. No person may speak twice on a particular subject until all who wish to speak have had an opportunity to do so. No one may speak for more than one minute to each issue.
MOTIONS	Only a registered member in good standing may make a motion. The Convention Secretary will accurately record the motion and its second before the motion can be accepted.
PROGRAM	The procedure governing the proposal of not recommended items and changes in the recommended Program is outlined in Article XI of the LWVLA Bylaws @ Section 3g, reinstate since meeting back in person since the pandemic
PROGRAM WORDING	The wording of any proposed Program item or any not recommended item that has been voted consideration may be amended provided the amendment does not enlarge the scope or change the general intent of the item. Items may be amended during debate at any time prior to Program adoption.
CONSIDERATION OF NOT RECOMMENDED ITEMS	A delegate shall have not more than three minutes to present a not recommended item. Adoption of consideration of a not recommended item requires a majority vote. Immediately after the not recommended item has been voted consideration, the negative opinions, not to exceed two minutes, may be presented.
VOTING	Now returning to in-person Convention, voting will be done by a voice yes or no vote or counting by a hand raise if the determination cannot be made by voice.
ACTION ON NOT RECOMMENDED ITEMS	Adoption of a not recommended item requires a two-thirds majority vote.
ANNOUNCEMENTS	Only announcement by the presiding officer will be permitted from the platform.
RESOLUTIONS	Only resolutions of a courtesy nature shall be presented to and acted upon by the Convention.
GUIDANCE TO THE BOARD	All verbal guidance to the Board shall be recorded by the Secretary and included in the Convention Minutes.

Report of the Finance/Budget Committee

LWVLA Operating Budget vs Actual (*estimated*)

April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2023

	2021-22		2022-23	
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual
INCOME				
PPFM Grant (Year 2)	\$ —	\$ 8,100.00	\$ —	\$ —
Funds from Closed Local Leagues	\$ —	\$ 533.80	\$ —	\$ —
Registration Legislative Day	\$ 250.00	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —
Registration Convention	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 2,100.00
Fundraising/Development	\$ 1,950.00	\$ 37.72	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 54.26
Unreimbursed Expense Donations	\$ 395.00	\$ —	\$ 395.00	\$ —
Education Fund Transfer	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,763.59	\$ 2,650.00	\$ 2,350.00
Membership Dues				
MAL Dues (10 members)	480.00	456.00	480.00	192.00
PMP Dues (250 LL members)	4,000.00	3,776.00	4,000.00	3,776.00
Total Membership Dues	<u>\$ 4,480.00</u>	<u>\$ 4,232.00</u>	<u>\$ 4,480.00</u>	<u>\$ 3,968.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 9,275.00	\$ 14,667.11	\$ 12,325.00	\$ 8,472.26
EXPENSES				
Board and Administration				
Board Lunches	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00
Board Travel	500.00	436.61	500.00	0.00
Retreat	500.00	1,331.95	500.00	1,138.22
Total Board and Administration	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,768.56	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,138.22
Fundraising/Development Expense				
Promo Items Purchased	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sales Tax	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.00
Shipping/Postage	15.00	567.16	15.00	0.00
Total Fundraising/Development	\$ 30.00	\$ 567.16	\$ 30.00	\$ —
Donations & Outreach				
Healthcare Advocacy	750.00	\$ 221.14	500.00	\$ —
Memberships and Donations	250.00	\$ —	250.00	\$ —
Voter Service	650.00	\$ 1,160.06	650.00	\$ 1,176.67
Total Donations & Outreach	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,381.20	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,176.67
Insurance	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,296.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,400.00
Local Leagues Support	\$ 500.00	\$ —	\$ 500.00	\$ —
National Council	\$ 2,500.00	\$ —	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,965.97
LWVUS PMP's for MAL'S	\$ 320.00	\$ 672.00	\$ 320.00	\$ 320.00

LWVLA Operating Budget vs Actual (*estimated*)
April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2023 (Continued)

	2021-22		2022-23	
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual
Operating Expense				
Financial Fees	130.00	11.07	130.00	<i>10.92</i>
Corporate Report Fee (SOS Website)	20.00	10.00	20.00	<i>10.00</i>
P.O. Box/Postage	105.00	134.00	105.00	<i>134.00</i>
Printing/Supplies/Copying	150.00	0.00	150.00	<i>0.00</i>
Website/Internet Services	<u>470.00</u>	<u>1,088.84</u>	<u>470.00</u>	<u><i>801.60</i></u>
Total Operating Expense	\$ 875.00	\$ 1,243.91	\$ 875.00	\$ 956.52
Legislative Day	\$ 700.00	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 1,733.33
State Convention			<u>4000.00</u>	<u><i>4,000.00</i></u>
Total State Convention	\$ —	\$ —	\$ <u>4,000.00</u>	\$ <u>4,000.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 9,275.00	\$ 6,928.83	\$ 12,325.00	\$ 12,690.71
INCOME/LOSS	\$ —	\$ 7,738.28	\$ —	\$ (4,218.45)

Note: Because the end of our fiscal year is March 31, and a number of our expenses come due toward the end of that year, it is hard to give an actual accounting of the past two years income and expense. Therefore, the Budget vs Actual numbers used in the process of coming up with the Budgets for 2023-25 had to be estimated. The estimated numbers are in italics.

LWVLA Proposed Budget April 1, 2023—March 31, 2025

	2023-24	2024-25
INCOME		
Registration Legislative Day	\$ 250.00	\$ —
Registration Convention	\$ —	\$ 3,500.00
Fundraising/Development	\$ 1,850.00	\$ 1,200.00
Unreimbursed Expense Donations	\$ 280.00	\$ 280.00
Education Fund Transfer	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,650.00
Membership Dues		
MAL Dues (10 members)	480.00	480.00
PMP Dues (250 LL members)	<u>4,000.00</u>	<u>4,000.00</u>
Total Membership Dues	\$ 4,480.00	\$ 4,480.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 9,060.00	\$ 12,110.00
EXPENSES		
Board and Administration		
Board Lunches	300.00	300.00
Board Travel	500.00	500.00
Retreat	<u>500.00</u>	<u>500.00</u>
Total Board and Administration	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,300.00
Fundraising/Development Expense		
Promo Items Purchased	0.00	0.00
Sales Tax	0.00	0.00
Shipping/Postage	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Fundraising/Development	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Donations & Outreach		
Healthcare Advocacy	550.00	300.00
Memberships and Donations	200.00	200.00
Voter Service	<u>650.00</u>	<u>650.00</u>
Total Donations & Outreach	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,150.00
Insurance	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,400.00
Local Leagues Support	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
National Council	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
LWVUS PMP's for MAL'S	\$ 320.00	\$ 320.00
Operating Expense		
Financial Fees (Bank/PayPal)	30.00	30.00
Corporate Report Fee (SOS Website)	10.00	10.00
P.O. Box/Postage	150.00	150.00
Printing/Supplies/Copying	150.00	150.00
Website/Internet Services	<u>800.00</u>	<u>800.00</u>
Total Operating Expense	\$ 1,140.00	\$ 1,140.00

LWVLA Proposed Budget
April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2025 (Continued)

	2023-24	2024-25
Legislative Day	\$ 700.00	\$ —
State Convention		
Lodging		700.00
Meals		1,700.00
Supplies		600.00
Travel		400.00
Venue		600.00
Total State Convention	\$ —	\$ 4,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 9,060.00	\$ 12,110.00
INCOME/LOSS	\$ —	\$ —

LWVLA Education Fund Budget vs Actual (*estimated*) April 1, 2021-March 31, 2023

	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual
INCOME				
General Donations	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 2,650.00	\$ 516.35
Unreimbursed Expense Donation	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —
Grant funds (PPFM-Yr. 2)	\$ —	\$ <u>6,250.00</u>	\$ —	\$ —
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 6,600.00	\$ 2,650.00	\$ 516.35
EXPENSE				
Corporate Report Fee	\$ —	\$ 10.00	\$ —	\$ 10.00
Donations & Outreach (Voter Services Advocacy)	\$ 650.00	\$ 344.13	\$ 650.00	\$ 500.00
National Council/Convention	\$ 500.00	\$ —	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Legislative Training Day	\$ 450.00	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 450.00
State Convention	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
Ed Fund share of Operating Expense	\$ 600.00	\$ 395.04	\$ 600.00	\$ —
PPFM Activities	\$ —	\$ <u>2,244.20</u>	\$ —	\$ <u>2,000.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,993.37	\$ 2,650.00	\$ 4,360.00
INCOME/LOSS	\$ —	\$ 3,606.63	\$ —	\$ (3,843.65)

Note: Because the end of our fiscal year is March 31, and a number of our expenses come due toward the end of that year, it is hard to give an actual accounting of the past two years income and expense. Therefore, the Budget vs Actual numbers used in the process of coming up with the Budgets for 2023-25 had to be estimated. The estimated numbers are in italics.

LWVLA Education Fund Proposed Budget April 1, 2023--March 31, 2025

	2023-24	2024-25
INCOME		
General Donations	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,660.00
Unreimbursed Expense Donations	\$ —	\$ —
Grant Funds	\$ <u>1,000.00</u>	\$ <u>1,000.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 2,210.00	\$ 2,660.00
EXPENSE		
Corporate Report Fee	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Donations & Outreach (Voter Service Advocacy)	\$ 650.00	\$ 650.00
National Convention/Council	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Legislative Training Day	\$ 450.00	\$ —
State Convention	\$ —	\$ 900.00
Ed Fund Share of Operating Expense	\$ <u>600.00</u>	\$ <u>600.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 2,210.00	\$ 2,660.00
INCOME/LOSS	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00

Report of the Bylaws Committee

No changes to the Bylaws are proposed. The Bylaws as modified at the 2021 LWVLA Convention will remain as is.

Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Louisiana Approved February 27, 2021

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be League of Women Voters of Louisiana, hereafter referred to in these Bylaws as LWVLA.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSES AND POLICIES

Section 1. Purposes. The purposes of the LWVLA are to promote political responsibility through and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

Section 2. Policies.

- a. The League shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.
- b. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy. LWVLA is fully committed to ensure compliance, in principle and in practice, with LWVUS' Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the LWVLA shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. Types of Membership.

- a. Voting Members. Persons at least 16 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of the local Leagues and the LWVLA.
 - (1) Those who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other League.
 - (2) Those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or State Unit or shall be State Members.
 - (3) Those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be life members excused from the payment of dues.
- b. Associate Members. All others who join the League under the age of 16 are non-voting associate members.

ARTICLE IV - LOCAL LEAGUES AND STATE UNITS

Section 1. Local Leagues.

- a. Members shall be organized into local Leagues in order to promote the purposes of the League and to take action on local governmental matters. The Board of Directors of the

LWVUS may grant full local League recognition to groups that have fulfilled the requirements of the LWVLA and those adopted by the LWVUS convention. Only one local League shall be recognized in any community.

- b. In the event of recurring failure of a local League to meet recognition requirements, the LWVLA Board shall recommend to the LWVUS Board that the LWVUS Board withdraw recognition from the local League. All funds held by a local League from which recognition has been withdrawn shall be paid to the LWVLA.

Section 2. State Members and State Units of the LWVLA.

- a. State Members are League members who live outside the area of, and are not enrolled in any, recognized local Leagues.
- b. A State Unit offers members an opportunity to participate in selected League activities, serves the community, and helps train new leaders for the organization. The League's voice is strengthened in more parts of the state. A State Unit may operate indefinitely as a State Unit or can work toward recognition as a local League.
- c. The LWVLA Board of Directors may organize State Members into State Member units. Rules and procedures for the formation and operation of such units shall be the responsibility of the LWVLA Board, and the units shall operate within guidelines adopted by the LWVLA, including setting a minimum number of members, a simple organizational structure, approval of a nonpartisan policy, and payment of state and national per member payments (PMPs). State Units are encouraged to participate in state and national program studies and to respond to state and national action alerts, and may work on local issues under the direction and close supervision of the LWVLA advisor(s).
- d. In the event of recurrent failure to adhere to guidelines for State Units or to operate within the limitations established by the LWVUS, the LWVLA may withdraw approval of the State Unit. All funds held by a State Unit from which approval has been withdrawn shall be paid to and disbursed by the LWVLA.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section 1. Election, Qualifications and Term.

- a. The officers of the LWVLA shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. They shall be voting members of the League and shall be elected by the Convention to hold office until the close of the next Convention, or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The President shall not be eligible for election for more than two consecutive terms. The other officers shall be limited to a maximum of three consecutive terms.
- b. The Nominating Committee also has these options should it be unable to fill out the slate of officers prior to a convention:
 - (1) When the duties of the President are shared among no more than three individuals, they may be designated as Co-Presidents. When the duties of the President are

- shared among four or more individuals they are designated as the Leadership Team and no officers are to be elected.
- (2) A minimum of four individuals may be nominated as a Leadership Team. The Leadership Team shall designate which team members shall perform such duties as customarily pertain to the office of president and treasurer, including Spokesperson and Financial Manager for the League, signing and endorsing checks and drafts, maintaining deposits in authorized financial institutions, and arranging for regular audits of the books. It is the responsibility of the Leadership Team to organize itself as well as assign and perform the duties required of the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team shall manage and supervise the operations of the LWVLA.
 - (3) When a Leadership Team has been elected, "Board" where stated in these bylaws and "Leadership Team" are therefore synonymous in authority and function for the LWVLA.

Section 2. Qualifications. No person shall be elected or shall continue to serve as an officer of this organization unless such person is a voting member enrolled in a local League in the state of Louisiana or is a State Member of the LWVLA.

Section 3. President.

- a. The President shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the Board of Directors unless the President shall designate someone to preside. The President may, in the absence or the disability of the Treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts, and notes. The President shall appoint committee chairs with the approval of the Board. The President shall be, *ex officio*, a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. The President shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the President and perform such other duties as may be designated by the board.
- b. In the event of the absence, disability, resignation or death of the President, the Vice-President shall assume the office. If the Vice-President is unable to serve as President, the Board shall fill the vacancy from among the elected Directors.

Section 4. Vice-President. The Vice President shall perform such duties as the President and the Board may designate.

Section 5. The Secretary. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all conventions and interim meetings of the LWVLA and of all meetings of the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall notify all officers and directors of their elections. The Secretary shall sign, with the President, all contracts and instruments when so authorized by the Board and shall perform such other functions as may be incidental to the office.

Section 6. The Treasurer. The Treasurer or a duly appointed assistant shall (a) have charge and custody and be responsible for all funds and securities of the LWVLA; (b) receive and give receipts for money due and payable to LWVLA, and deposit all such moneys in the name of the LWVLA in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as selected in accordance with Article XII; and (c) in general perform all legal requirements and sound financial management practices of the office of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall arrange for an annual audit or financial

review. The Treasurer shall make financial statements to the Board at its regular meetings and at Convention. Other duties may be assigned to the Treasurer by the President or the Board.

ARTICLE VI - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Number, Manner of Selection, and Term of Office. The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers of the LWVLA and four elected Directors. The elected Directors shall be elected by the Convention and shall serve until the conclusion of the next biennial Convention or until successors have been elected and qualified. Elected Directors shall be limited to a maximum of three consecutive terms. The elected board members may appoint up to four additional Directors. The term of office of the appointed Directors shall be one year; at the end of this term, the remaining members of the board shall fill the resulting vacancies by appointment. All appointments shall expire at the conclusion of the next regular biennial Convention.

Section 2. Qualifications. No person shall be elected or appointed or shall continue to serve as a Director of this organization unless such person is a voting member enrolled in a local League in the state of Louisiana or is a State Member of the LWVLA.

Section 3. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring among the elected members of the Board of Directors by reason of absence, resignation, death, or disqualification of an officer or elected or appointed director, other than the President, shall be filled, until the next biennial convention. The Nominating Committee shall be asked to make recommendations and a vote by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board of Directors will select the appointee. Any voting member of the LWVLA shall be eligible to fill the vacancy of any elected or appointed member of the Board other than President.

Section 4. Resignations. Any member of the LWVLA Board may resign by giving written notice to the LWVLA Board. A resignation need not be approved by the Board in order to be effective.

Section 5. Removal from the Board. The Board will follow its policy regarding the removal of a Board member.

Section 6. Powers and Duties.

- a. The Board of Directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the LWVLA, with full power and authority to manage and conduct the same, subject to the instruction of the Convention. The Board shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program on state governmental matters as adopted by the Convention. It shall accept responsibility delegated to it by the Board of Directors of the LWVUS. It shall have the power to create such special committees as it deems necessary and shall perform such other duties as are specified in these bylaws. The Board shall appoint a custodian of the records to ensure LWVLA records are archived according to the Board's policy.
- b. The President and the Board shall assign each Board member a portfolio or a project for which the Board members shall be responsible.
- c. It shall accept responsibility delegated to it by the Board of Directors of the LWVUS for

- (1) the organization and development of local Leagues and State Units for carrying out the program,
 - (2) the promotion in the local Leagues and State Units of finance programs requisite to further the work of the League as a whole, and
 - (3) transmission of per member payments (PMPs) by State Members to the LWVUS.
- d. Members of the Board shall follow its conflict of interest policy to protect the LWVLA's tax-exempt status.

Section 7. Regular Meetings. There shall be at least four regular meetings of the Board of Directors annually. The President shall notify each member of the Board of Directors of all regular meetings by-email at least two weeks before any such meeting. No action taken at any regular Board meeting attended by three-fourths of the members of the Board shall be invalidated because of failure of any members or member of the Board to receive any notice properly sent or because of any irregularity in any notice actually received. Meeting may be conducted in-person or through use of internet services, designated by the President, that support visible displays identifying those participating and texts of pending motions and support voting and showing the results of voting. Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) shall be followed in conducting the meetings.

Section 8. Special Meetings. The President may call special meetings of the Board of Directors and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of three members of the Board. Members of the Board shall be notified of the time and place of special meetings at least six days prior to such meeting, provided, however, that during a Convention or interim meeting the President may call, or upon the request of three members of the Board shall call, a special meeting of the Board by handing the members of the Board a written notice of the time and place of said meeting.

Section 9. Absences. Absence from two Board meetings in one year may be considered, by a quorum of the remaining Board members, to be a resignation of the absent member from the Board and said quorum may fill that vacancy as stated above in Article VI, Section 3.

Section 10. Quorum. A majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum and a majority of the members in attendance at any board meeting shall, in the presence of a quorum, decide its actions. Any one or more members of the Board may participate in a meeting by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting.

Section 11. Executive Committee. The officers shall constitute an Executive Committee to transact business in the interim of Board meetings, provided that nothing shall be done contrary to the policy adopted at the Convention or to any action of the Board. Action of the Executive Committee shall be presented to the Board for approval at its next regular meeting.

Section 12. Minutes. The finalized minutes of the Board of Directors shall be made available to the membership.

Section 13. Social Media. LWVLA Social media networks/links are collective communication channels and engagement platforms that are owned by LWVLA. Their development, content,

use, access, management, and security are governed by the Board. The interconnected scope, evolving nature and legal aspects of these digital tools require that the users employ the LWVLA principles, positions, rules and guidelines. The board shall establish and maintain a list of approved members in good standing and/or contractors who are allowed access to post, send, message and share content across the different platforms. Platforms include but are not limited to the LWVLA Website, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Blogs, and such. The Board shall remove users at will.

ARTICLE VII - LWVLA CONVENTION

Section 1. Place, Date, Call, and Notification. A convention of the LWVLA shall be held biennially in the first three months of the odd-numbered years. The time and place of the Convention shall be determined by the LWVLA Board of Directors. The President shall send a first call for the Convention to the members of local Leagues and State Members not less than five months prior to the opening date of the Convention fixed in said call. Thereafter the LWVLA Board of Directors may advance or postpone the opening date of the convention not more than two weeks from the date fixed in the first call. A final call for Convention shall be sent by the LWVLA President to the members of the local Leagues, State Units, and State Members at least thirty days before Convention.

Section 2. Composition. The Convention delegates shall consist of voting members of the local Leagues and State Members of the LWVLA.

Section 3. Qualification of Delegates and Voting. Each delegate shall be entitled to only one vote at the convention. Each delegate representing a local League shall be entitled to vote only if that League has met its state per member payment (PMP) responsibilities. A State Member may serve as a voting delegate only if they have paid their PMP to the state. The LWVLA Board may make an exception in the case of proven hardship. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted. Recognition of qualified delegates shall be determined by a Credentials Committee designated by the President.

Section 4. Powers and Duties. The Convention shall consider, adopt, and authorize for action a program, elect officers and directors, adopt a budget for the ensuing two years, and transact such other business as may be presented.

Section 5. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the delegates registered at the Convention provided that no less than one-half of local Leagues and State Units are represented.

ARTICLE VIII - STATEWIDE LEGISLATIVE AND ADVOCACY TRAINING MEETING

A statewide legislative and advocacy training meeting may be called between State Conventions as determined by the LWVLA board. A formal call specifying purpose, time, and place shall be issued to members at least a month in advance. The Board shall budget for and determine the scope of the statewide meeting.

ARTICLE IX - NATIONAL CONVENTION AND COUNCIL

Section 1. National Convention. The Board of Directors, at a meeting before the date on which names of delegates must be sent to the national office, may select delegates to the National Convention up to the number allotted the LWVLA under other provisions of the bylaws of the LWVUS.

Section 2. National Council. At the meeting immediately preceding the LWVUS Council meeting the Board of Directors may select delegates to such council meeting up to the number allotted the LWVLA under the provisions of the bylaws of the LWVUS.

ARTICLE X - NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members, two of whom shall be members of the Board of Directors. The chair and two members, who shall not be members of the Board of Directors, shall be elected by the Convention. Nominations for these offices shall be made by the current Nominating Committee. Further nominations may be made from the floor of the Convention. The other members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors after the Convention. Vacancies occurring in the Nominating Committee by reason of death, resignation, or disqualification shall be filled by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Suggestions for nominees. The President of the LWVLA shall send the name and address of the chair of the Nominating Committee to all members. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to request of all members' nominations for the offices to be filled. All nominees must consent to being nominated. Any member may submit suggestions to the Nominating Committee Chair. The Nominating Committee Chair shall notify the local League Presidents or Leaders of all submissions. All suggestions shall be submitted at least three months before the Convention.

Section 3. Report of Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor. The report of the Nominating Committee of its nominations for officers and Directors, or for a Leadership Team, and the Chair and two members of the succeeding Nominating Committee shall be sent to the local Leagues two months before the date of the Convention. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the Convention on the first day of the Convention. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any delegate to the Convention, provided consent of the nominee has been secured.

Section 4. Election. The election shall be in the charge of an Election Committee appointed by the President on the first day of the Convention. The election shall be by ballot, except when there is but one nominee for each office. It shall then be in order to move that the Secretary cast the ballot of the Convention for each candidate. A majority vote of those present and voting shall constitute an Election.

ARTICLE XI - PROGRAM

Section 1. Authorization. The Principles, the concepts of government supported by the League, are the authorization for adoption of state and local programs.

Section 2. Program. The program of the LWVLA shall consist of

- a. Public Policy Positions adopted by the Convention by consensus or concurrence.
- b. Action Plan to implement the Public Policy Positions and those state government issues adopted by the Convention delegates for concerted study.

Section 3. Procedures. The convention shall act upon Program using the following procedures:

- a. Six months prior to the start of the Convention, the Board of Directors shall appoint a Program Committee.
- b. The Program Committee shall ask local Leagues, State Units, other State Members, and standing Board Committees for recommendations for the Program.
- c. The Program Committee shall consider the recommendations which have been sent in by the local League Boards, State Units, other State Members, or standing Board Committees, including adoption or amendment of a LWVLA position by consensus or by concurrence in accordance with LWVUS Guidelines for LWVUS Studies (<http://lww.org/search/content/guideline%20for%20study>).
- d. Four months prior to the Convention, the Program Committee shall recommend to the LWVLA Board of Directors a proposed Program.
- e. Once the LWVLA Board approves such Program, it shall immediately be submitted by the LWVLA Board to the local Leagues, State Units, and other State Members for their consideration.
- f. Two months before the opening of Convention, the local Leagues, State Units, and other State Members must submit in writing to the LWVLA Board any recommended changes, at which time the LWVLA Board may modify the proposed Program.
- g. The proposed Program may not be voted on by the Convention on the same day on which it is proposed.
- h. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be required for adoption of subjects in the proposed Program as presented to the Convention by the Board of Directors.
- i. Further changes in the proposed Program submitted for consideration of but not recommended by the Board of Directors may be made by the convention provided
 - (1) the Convention shall order consideration by a majority vote,
 - (2) the vote on the proposed change shall not be taken on the same day as the order for consideration, and
 - (3) the Convention adopts the change by a two-thirds vote.

Section 4. Member Action. Members may act in the name of the LWVLA only when authorized to do so by the Board of Directors of the LWVLA.

Section 5. Local League, State Unit, and State Member Action. Local Leagues, State Units, and other State Members may take action on state governmental matters after receiving permission from the President or President's designee. Local Leagues, State Member Units, and other State

Members may act only in conformity with and not contrary to, the positions taken by the LWVLA.

ARTICLE XII - FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the LWVLA shall commence on the first day of April of each year.

Section 2. Financial Support.

- a. Each local League shall make an annual per member payment (PMP) to the LWVLA in an amount to be determined by a three-fifths vote of those present and voting at each convention.
- b. State Members shall pay LWVLA and LWVUS PMPs. The LWVLA shall make a PMP payment to the LWVUS for State Members.
- c. When two or more members reside at the same address in a common household, the payment determined by the Convention shall be made for the first member; a payment equal to one-half the PMP shall be paid for each other member.
- d. The PMP for a member who is a student shall be equal to one-half the PMP amount determined at Convention. A student is defined as an individual enrolled either full or part-time in an accredited institution.
- e. The LWVLA may authorize the payment of a designated part of each PMP to the League of Women Voters of Louisiana Education Fund.
- f. The LWVLA and local Leagues shall be excused from making PMPs for life members.

Section 3. Budget. The Board shall submit to the Convention for adoption a balanced budget for the ensuing two years. A copy of the proposed budget shall be sent to the President or Leader of each local League, State Unit, and other State Members at least two months in advance of the Convention.

Section 4. Budget Committee. The budget shall be prepared by a committee which shall be appointed for that purpose at least four months in advance of the Convention. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Budget Committee but shall not be eligible to serve as Chair.

Section 5. Finance Committee. The Board shall appoint a standing committee that will provide accurate and complete operational and financial data to the Board of Directors. The policy regarding the Finance Committee will be followed.

Section 6. Distribution of Funds on Dissolution. In the event of dissolution for any cause of the LWVLA, all monies and securities which may at that time be owned by or under the absolute control of the LWVLA shall be paid to the LWVUS. All other property of whatsoever nature, whether real, personal, or mixed, which may at the time be owned or under control of the LWVLA shall be disposed of by any officer or employee of the organization having possession of the same to such person, organization, or corporation, for such public, charitable, or education uses and proposes as may be designated by the then Board of Directors of the LWVLA.

Section 7. Fiscal Report. The financial books of the Treasurer shall be reviewed annually.

ARTICLE XIII - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Parliamentary Authority. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, shall govern the organization on all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS

Amendments. Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed by the LWVLA Board of Directors or by any local League board, State Unit, or other State Member provided the proposed changes are submitted to the LWVLA Board of Directors at least three months prior to a convention. All such proposed amendments shall be sent by the LWVLA Board to the Presidents or Leaders of all local Leagues, State Units and other State Members at least two months prior to a convention together with the recommendations of the LWVLA Board of Directors. The Presidents or Leaders of all local Leagues shall notify the members of their respective Leagues of the proposed amendments. The LWVLA Board shall notify the State Members who do not belong to a State Unit. Failure of a local League President or Leader to give such notice or failure of any member to receive such notice shall not invalidate amendments to bylaws which may be adopted by two thirds vote of any convention.

- As adopted by the Twenty-eighth Convention, March 22-23, 1987
- as amended by the Twenty-ninth Convention, March 1989
- as amended by the Thirty-fourth Convention, March 1999
- as amended by the Thirty-sixth Convention, April 6, 2003
- as amended by the Thirty-seventh Convention, April 10, 2005
- as amended by the Thirty eighth Convention, April 14, 2007
- as amended by the Forty -first Convention, March 10, 2013
- as amended by the Forty -third Convention, March 12, 2017
- as amended by the Forty -fourth Convention, January 6, 2019
- as amended by the Forty - sixth Convention, February 27, 2021

Report of the Program Committee

The Program Committee proposes the adoption of all LWVLA Public Policy Positions approved at Convention 2021.

Public Policy Positions of the LWVLA Approved February 27, 2021

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT, STATE OF LOUISIANA

Campaign Financing

The League of Women Voters of Louisiana (LWVLA) believes that changes must be made in the methods of financing political campaigns in order to make our government more accountable, more representative and more responsible to all our citizens. The goals of a campaign financing system should be:

- a. To ensure the public's right to know
- b. To combat corruption and undue influence
- c. To enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office.

Collective Bargaining

The LWVLA:

- a. Supports a comprehensive labor-management law on the state level regulating collective bargaining procedures for all categories of employees in the public sector
- b. Opposes an unlimited right for public employees
- c. Supports a limited right to strike for public employees under certain restrictions which promote the public health and safety and which insure complete utilization of impasse procedures
- d. Supports compulsory arbitration when impasse persists.

Constitution

The LWVLA supports a state constitution that conforms to the following criteria:

- a. Should be fundamental law, free of statutory material
- b. Should be written in clear and simple language
- c. Should provide for the checks and balances among the three branches of government
- d. Should be reasonably easy to amend
- e. Should provide for majority rule as basic to our democratic form of government, along with protection of individual rights of citizens
- f. Should allow for intergovernmental cooperation.

Ethics (Adopted from LWV-Connecticut by concurrence, 2013)

The LWVLA believes that the public should have confidence in the integrity of its government. Government officials and employees should be held accountable for carrying out their duties in both an effective and an ethically responsible manner. To these ends, the LWVLA supports actions to:

- a. Reform, strengthen, and clarify Louisiana's codes of ethics as they apply to public officials, public employees, and lobbyists
- b. Require a transparent, competitive, and clearly defined state-contract selection process
- c. Promote the establishment of parish and/or municipal ethics commissions and ethics codes as applied to parish and municipal public officials, public employees, and lobbyists
- d. Ensure the existence of strong, effective, independent watchdog agencies, such as the Louisiana Ethics Administration, Louisiana Legislative Auditor, and the Office of State Inspector General
- e. Support the allocation of resources necessary for these offices to fulfill their responsibilities.

Fiscal Policy

The LWVLA supports measures to improve the state tax system:

- a. Sound administrative tax policies, conforming to criteria of tax certainty and stability, minimum cost of compliance and collections, and enforceability
- b. Equitable taxation based on the principles of ability to pay and/or benefits received, with future revenues based on ability to pay.

The LWVLA opposes:

- a. Any state imposed limitations on local governments' tax rates for property, sales, or other
- d. State imposed exemption of manufacturing establishments from local property taxes.

The LWVLA affirms its support of elimination of the homestead exemption from property taxes and supports, as replacement, some form of circuit breaker, with relief to be granted primarily on the basis of income.

(Adopted from LWV-Illinois by concurrence, 2013)

The LWVLA supports a diversified revenue system which

- a. Principally relies on a combination of broad-based taxes and user fees
- b. Is equitable, progressive, stable, responsive and simple
- c. Overall is based on the following criteria:
 - 1) Equity: Imposes similar amounts of tax on taxpayers in like circumstances
 - 2) Progressivity: Is based on ability to pay so that those with greater ability pay a greater percentage of their income.
 - 3) Stability: Provides a stable source of revenue
 - 4) Responsiveness: Is able to capture and reflect long-term economic growth
 - 5) Simplicity: Is easy and efficient to administer and is understandable to the taxpayer.

The LWVLA supports

- a. A progressive income tax with a graduated rate schedule
- b. A broad-based sales tax with exemptions for food and medicines to reduce the impact on low-income person

- c. The use of the property tax for partially financing education and local government and services
- d. Uniform, efficient and professional tax assessment procedures.
- e. User fees that are structured and levied with sensitivity to low-income persons.

The LWVLA supports achieving policy goals through direct expenditures rather than deductions, exemptions and credits. If deductions, exemptions and credits are used, they should:

- a. Decrease the tax burden on lower income persons and further overall progressivity
- b. Be periodically reviewed to justify continuation
- c. Be the most efficient means of achieving their intended purpose.

State Pension System for Public Employees (*Approved by the LWVLA Convention, March 15, 2015 following state study and consensus*)

The LWVLA:

- a. Believes public employers must provide sufficient incentives to compete with the private sector in the labor market for the recruitment of competent and effective employees
- b. Supports, when necessary, increasing state revenues to fully fund each state pension system through additional taxation, fees, thorough collection of revenues, and reducing tax exemptions, tax credits and tax rebates, because the state has a constitutionally mandated contractual relationship with its employees regarding their pension benefits and the state has a constitutional obligation to maintain actuarial soundness and long-term solvency in meeting this contract
- c. Encourages state officers and legislators, before a vote is taken, to scrutinize proposed retirement bills and proposed amendments for their compliance with federal and state constitutional and statutory requirements, cost effectiveness, and actuarial effects on the state retirement system's long-term solvency
- d. Towards such scrutiny, supports provision of time sufficient for the review, analysis and reporting by the Legislative Auditor on the legal and actuarial effects of retirement bills and of any amendments to retirement bills affecting the state pension systems
- e. Supports raising the retirement age for full pension benefits in the state retirement systems for the hiring of new non-hazardous duty public employees in keeping with the same age requirements as Social Security
- f. Has no consensus on retirement age requirements for hazardous-duty employees
- g. Recognizes that without some periodic increases (COLAs or PBIs), the buying power of pensions is eroded
- h. Supports balancing fairness to the current government employers, public employees, and taxpayers with fairness to the future government employers, employees and taxpayers as the legislators consider proposed changes in benefit plan features, funding, or structure for new hires of state public employees and as the Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee (PRSAC's) estimates the discount rate and sets the public employers' annual contribution rate

- i. Acknowledges that this standard, which is supported in much of the professional literature, requires public discipline to make the necessary actuarially determined contributions, keep politics out of this obligation, and use a discount rate in calculations that is neither overly optimistic or overly pessimistic
- j. Supports wide public notification, engagement and transparent discussion of any proposed major changes in benefit features or structure for pension benefits for new state employees.

Local Taxes

The LWVLA:

- a. Believes the distribution of state revenues to local government is an appropriate source of local revenue
- b. Opposes statutory limits on local government's ability to raise taxes and spend revenue
- c. Believes local services mandated by the State should have state appropriations linked to the mandate.

Policy, Programs, and Performance

The LWVLA believes that Louisiana State government policy, programs, and performance must meet these criteria:

- a. Adequate financing and effective enforcement
- b. Competent personnel
- c. Coordination among agencies and levels of Government
- d. Fiscal accountability
- e. Home rule in determining local matters
- f. Well-defined channels for citizens' input and review
- g. The League will take action to ensure these criteria in areas of program when such action is deemed advisable by the board.

Office of the Assessor

The LWVLA supports measures to mandate professional qualifications for the assessor and assessor's staff.

Registration and Election Laws

The LWVLA supports equitable registration and election laws that protect the right to vote of every citizen and their efficient implementation:

- a. Strictly enforced qualifications for commissioners to ensure competent personnel
- b. More liberal absentee registration and voting requirements
- c. Simple and clear ballots and election procedures.

JUSTICE

The LWVLA believes the basic purposes of a correctional system are the protection of society and safe rehabilitation of the offender.

Early Intervention

The LWVLA supports intervention targeted to children targeted at risk or identified with social, emotional, or developmental problems including but not limited to:

- a. Abuse
- b. Delinquency
- c. Developmental disability
- d. Education failure
- e. Exposure to violence abuse
- f. Neglect
- g. Poverty
- h. Youth or parental mental illness
- i. Youth or parental substance

Correctional System - Juveniles

The LWVLA supports:

- a. A coordinated and standardized system of interventions both from the state level and community-based level for juvenile wellbeing to prevent and reduce the number of children entering the juvenile justice system.
- b. A coordinated and standardized system of juvenile corrections, financed at the state and, providing for:
 - 1) Commitment to correctional institutions on the basis of:
 - 2) Seriousness of crime
 - 3) Number of crimes
 - 4) Protection of society
 - 5) Age of offender
 - 6) Uniformity of treatment
 - 7) Statewide collection of data according to a uniform system
 - 8) Care, education, protection of the rights of the child
 - 9) Diagnostic testing for serious habitual offenders
 - 10) Community correctional centers
 - 11) After-care facilities

Correctional System - Adults

The LWVLA supports:

- a. A comprehensive study of Louisiana sentencing law
- b. Alternatives for incarceration including community-based treatment and expansion of the work release program
- c. Mandatory pre-release planning for all inmates who are about to exit the Department of Corrections
- d. Work release for all inmates who exit the Department of Corrections
- e. Adequate funds to increase vocational/educational opportunities in the prison
- f. Strict selection criteria in selecting inmates to be placed in community correctional centers

- g. Community correctional programs to be implemented with restitution to victims by offenders
- h. Utilization of reliable and proven risk scales by the judiciary
- i. A parole board and a pardon board with members professionally trained fields related to criminal justice
- j. Utilization of reliable and proven risk assessment scales by the parole board
- k. Probation fees to help defray the cost of probation services

Funding Louisiana's Public Defenders Office

The LWVLA believes that constitutionally mandated rights should be protected. The Sixth Amendment states, "in all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right...to have the assistance of counsel for his defense." Subsequent court rulings have expanded that right to include defense of the indigent. Unstable, inadequate, inequitable, or unreliable funding of public defense jurisdictions in Louisiana jeopardizes the right of indigent criminal defendants to competent, effective counsel.

In order that Louisiana's public defense jurisdictions uphold their constitutional obligations, the LWVLA supports reforms to public defense funding:

- a. Provision of stable, reliable, adequate and equitable funding to each public defender jurisdiction.
- b. Provision of equitable benefits to the employees of Louisiana's public defense system as a governmental subdivision.
- c. Reduction in the demand for services by reclassifying certain minor and nonviolent offenses to remove imprisonment as a consequence.

Merit Selection of Judges

The LWVLA believes:

- a. The state of Louisiana should choose its judges by a merit selection system, which would be fair, objective, and representative of the citizenry.
- b. In order to maximize public input, the judicial nominating process should not be dominated by the judiciary; therefore, judges should not serve as nominating commissioners nor should judges be appointed to chair the commissions.
- c. Groups whose primary purpose is to endorse or support candidates should not be a part of the nominating process.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Environmental Quality

The LWVLA believe that the financial cost of waste disposal is the primary responsibility of the generator and/or disposer under a strong state management program.

The LWVLA of Louisiana supports

- a. A natural and scenic rivers system

- b. Preservation of areas of unique ecological systems, particularly the coastal wetlands and the Atchafalaya Basin
- c. Protection of ground and surface water integrity through a program of integrated usage of surface water, ground water, and reclaimed wastewater for private and commercial purposes. *(Updated by LWVLA, 2013)*
- d. Public policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Integrated Resource Planning *(updated "Least-Cost Energy Planning position, 2013)*

The State of Louisiana should use least-cost energy Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) concepts in development of energy policy. IRP takes into consideration the environmental impacts of energy sources and the regulatory requirements associated with each energy source.

Water Resources *(Adopted from LWV-Connecticut by concurrence in 2013)*

The LWVLA supports:

- a. State policies and programs which promote comprehensive long-range planning for conservation and development of land and water resources.
- b. Planning that considers the interaction of our natural resources with each other as well as their relation to the needs of our growing population
- c. Enforcement of regulations to improve water quality
- d. Provision for an adequate staff to implement programs
- e. Acquisition and preservation of open space land, including inland wetlands and tidal marshes
- f. A regional approach to planning adequate and equitable financing of state programs
- g. Establishment of clear lines of authority and coordination of policy among state agencies.

SOCIAL POLICY

Child Care Centers

The LWVLA supports:

- a. Mandatory licensing of child care centers to provide for minimum standards including:
 - 1) Safe, clean physical environment
 - 2) Appropriately trained, qualified staff
 - 3) Suitable ratio of staff to children
 - 4) Minimum curriculum guidelines or program of activities.
- b. The use of injunctive powers in the closure of childcare centers through civil as well as criminal procedure

Human Trafficking *(Adopted from LWV-Ohio by concurrence, 2013)*

The LWVLA supports policy changes that will assist the victims of human trafficking and a comprehensive strategy from all levels of law enforcement to identify, prosecute, and reduce the demand for commercial sex.

The LWVLA believes that human trafficking is an issue that requires changes to our public policy including:

- a. Human forced labor and sex trafficking should be stopped through legislation and changes in public policy.
- b. Victims of human trafficking should be provided with services on an as-needed basis to facilitate integration into the community, including but not limited to counseling, drug and alcohol treatment, safe housing, physical and mental health care, legal representation, job training, ESL/GED/education and employment assistance.
- c. Minors who have been commercially sexually exploited or forced into slave labor should be legally considered as victims and given special physical and mental health care.
- d. Cooperation and collaboration among state and local agencies is necessary to enforce prohibitions and prosecute traffickers and other offenders and consumers.
- e. There should be aggressive enforcement of laws dealing with traffickers and offenders and consumers.
- f. Strategies to reduce the demand for commercial sex and forced labor trafficking should be employed by law enforcement agencies and the courts. One example would be court-ordered attendance at "john schools".
- g. Training and education of the public, law enforcement, and service providers should be widely available.

Internet and Media (*Adopted from LWV-Connecticut and LWV-Lafayette's 2008 study by concurrence, 2013, where noted*)

The LWVLA supports government policies that promote:

- a. Broadband, wireless, and other means of high-speed Internet deployment throughout the state
- b. Access to high-speed Internet, without charge, through schools, libraries, and other secure public buildings
- c. State efforts to protect the open, neutral, nondiscriminatory nature of the Internet
- d. Adequate protection, promotion, and funding of community access television channels regardless of the provider of TV/video services to Louisiana residents
- e. Government provision of opportunities for citizen participation in decisions regarding Community access TV
- f. The creation of municipal and cooperative telecommunications networks and opposes the imposition of any regulation or condition on such networks that are not borne by the private sector.

The League believes that a free and open Internet is increasingly important to the protection of individual liberties including freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of association. These liberties are guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and by the Louisiana Constitution.

The League also believes that net neutrality protections are essential for political discourse, dissemination of news, and democratic participation. Therefore, LWVLA supports the LWVUS position to protect the open, neutral, nondiscriminatory nature of the Internet.

Efficient, high speed access to the Internet for all Louisiana residents, regardless of geographic location or neighborhood demographics, is a necessity for assuring equal access to local and state government, for maintaining openness and transparency in government activities, for communicating with legislative leaders, for engaging in political discourse, for competing in the global marketplace, and for assuring that voters receive the information they need to participate in our democracy.

The League believes that community access television channels, for public, educational, and governmental (also known as PEG) programming, must be adequately protected, promoted, and funded, regardless of the provider of TV/video services to Louisiana residents. Statewide public affairs programming must be adequately protected, promoted, and funded by the state legislature and available to all Louisiana residents, regardless of the provider of TV/video services. Government should provide opportunities for citizen participation in decisions regarding community access, or PEG, TV.

Access to the public airwaves through modern TV/video communication is essential to the public interest and to the League's mission and purpose-to protect civil liberties, to ensure open, transparent government, and to promote the public's right to know. To protect the public interest, high quality PEG transmission and PEG availability on basic service tiers are essential.

HEALTHCARE

Affordable Care Act

The LWVLA supports the Affordable Care Act (ACA) including Louisiana's Medicaid Expansion component of the ACA. The League continues to work to educate the citizens of Louisiana on the need for further basic healthcare reforms and accountability. The goal must be a basic level of healthcare that provides access to quality care for all.

LWVLA supports the 1993 LWVUS Positions on Healthcare, which proposed:

- a. A basic level of quality care at an affordable cost for all U.S. residents
- b. A national health insurance plan financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums and/or an employer-based system that provides for universal access. The League opposes a strictly private market-based model of financing healthcare and the administration of the health care system solely by the private sector or the states.
- c. Administration of U.S. healthcare system by a combination of private and public sectors, federal, state and/or regional agencies.
- d. Allocation of healthcare resources based on the urgency of the medical condition, patient life expectancy, expected outcome of treatment, cost of procedure, duration of care, quality of life after the treatment, and the wishes of the patient/family--not on the ability of a patient to pay for services.

In 2010, the LWVUS supported the passage of the ACA. The LWVLA is committed to helping Americans understand the ACA and its pivotal impact on their lives and remains vigilant in light of current efforts to repeal or diminish the law in Congress and in the Courts.

LWVLA concurs with LWVUS 2016 Convention which stated that "Every U.S. resident should have access to affordable, quality in-and out-patient behavioral health care, including needed medications and supportive services that are integrated with and achieves parity with physical health care.

Reproductive Choices

The LWVLA concurs with the 1982 LWVUS Public Policy on Reproductive Choices:

LWVLA believes in the constitutional right to privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices. It actively opposes *attempts* to repeal the reproductive health services provided under the ACA.

Mental Health/Behavioral Care (*Adopted from LWV-Illinois by consensus, 2013*)

The LWVLA supports a comprehensive and coordinated system of treatment and rehabilitation services for adults and children with mental illness.

- a. There should be adequate funding, planning, program standards, and personnel training requirements for both state facilities and community programs.
- b. The League supports a broad array of adequate and accessible community services.
- c. Although primary responsibility should rest with the state, funding from local, federal, and nongovernmental sources should be encouraged.
- d. A system of local boards to levy taxes, administer all funds, and to plan and coordinate services should be required throughout the state.
- e. The State should require local governments to provide in their zoning ordinances for residential programs for persons with mental illness.
- f. The League supports a comprehensive and coordinated system of services for mentally ill adults and emotionally disturbed children and adolescents.
- g. The Department of Health should ensure both adequate state hospitals/ partners and community services to treat and rehabilitate the seriously mentally ill. These services should be integrated with those of other state agencies.
- h. The League supports a state mandate that adequate and accessible community services be available for seriously mentally ill persons of all ages. The array of services should include:
 - 1) Screening and evaluation
 - 2) Community hospitalization
 - 3) Medication management
 - 4) Crisis intervention
 - 5) Case management
 - 6) Day treatment
 - 7) Life skills programs
 - 8) Residential programs
 - 9) Job training counseling
 - 10) Social and recreational activities
 - 11) Educational services
 - 12) Family support and respite programs
 - 13) Transportation

The LWVLA believes:

- a. The State should provide adequate funding for state facilities and should be the primary source of funding for community-based mental health services. Local government, together with federal and non-government sources, should also contribute to community services.
- b. Funding should be tied to identified needs and effectiveness of services.
- c. State and local government should share the responsibility for planning for community services; implementation should be left to local government.
- d. A system of local boards to administer funds for services for the mentally ill should be required throughout the state.
- e. The boards should have the power to tax and to allocate state and federal funds for community services and for hospitalization of mentally ill persons.
- f. The boards should coordinate and monitor community services.
- g. The State should set and enforce standards for all mental health programs and facilities it funds.

EDUCATION

Public Education

The LWVLA supports adequate funding of public schools and the following measures to strengthen public education at all levels.

- a. An emphasis on a high level (i.e. major proportion of cost born by the state) foundation program with allowance for the greater need of some pupils, provisions for meeting state mandated education achievement goals, and ample opportunities for citizen input
- b. An equalization formula based on local support made uniform by equalization of assessments
- c. An extension of state support to include capital outlay as well as operating expenditures
- d. Appointment of state superintendent by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)

The LWVLA opposes the use of public funds for non-public schools

Charter Schools

The League of Women Voters of Louisiana supports

1. Representative government, transparency, open government, and the Sunshine Act at each level of the governance of charter schools. This includes the charter school board's governance as a political subdivision of the state and in the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the local school board's authorization of charter schools.
 - Charter school board membership should represent the geographical area of the students attending that school, regardless of type of charter school. Membership should include some representation of the various demographic groups within that school board's jurisdiction as well as at least one parent/guardian of children attending that school.

- There should be a legal process and timeline for the return of a Recovery School District charter school, or schools, to the jurisdiction of the local district school board.
- Information should be available to the public through open electronic access, via the charter school's website, to provide the following information:
 - The charter contract for the charter school between its non-profit corporation and the authorizer
 - Timely public notice that meets Open Meetings law for public bodies
 - A list of current board members and their contact information
 - Approved minutes of each board meeting sequentially for each year and past years
 - The school's most current School Performance Score
 - An explanation of the complaint and appeal process
 - Discipline policies or student/parent handbook containing them
 - Contact information for the school, including address and name of school leader
 - For a school's financial report, the League supports access to financial reports but not necessarily on the school's website.
- The Louisiana legislature should limit authorization of charter schools to two entities, the elected district school board and, as the state's public education appellate body, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).
- The application and approval processes by charter school authorizers should be transparent and equitable, subject to a set of published guidelines for approval and renewal of charter schools.

2. Representative government that holds to account both the boards of charter schools and their contractors through adequate government oversight and control of this public service in order to ensure taxpayer dollars are used efficiently and effectively for that service

- Funding for virtual charter schools should be reviewed and evaluated at required intervals to determine whether their funding level is appropriate.
- To protect the taxpayer's interest, the Louisiana Department of Education and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education should be required to report publicly the terms of the mortgage or lease of privately owned facilities paid for with public funds.
- Disclosure, oversight, and annual audits of the financial records of not-for-profit and for-profit charter school management organizations should be required.
- As a recipient of public education funds, charter school boards should be required to meet the same procurement requirements as all local education agencies, including competitive bids and public disclosure for:
 - Acquisition of sites
 - Construction of facilities
 - Purchasing of supplies
 - Purchasing of equipment
 - Purchasing of services

- The Louisiana Department of Education should require prompt compliance by charter schools to correct any material findings issued by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor in its review of Types 2, 4 and 5 charter schools.
- All movable property, equipment, and reusable supplies purchased by a charter school with public dollars should be surrendered to the authorizer if the charter closes for any reason.

3. A quality public education that is essential for a strong, viable, and sustainable democracy and is a civil right. Government at all levels shares the responsibility for equality of opportunity for education regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. The League is committed to racial integration of schools as a necessary condition for equal access to education.

- The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Louisiana Department of Education should ensure that students' civil rights are protected in every education setting, including all types of charter schools.
- The Louisiana Department of Education should at regular intervals send staff to monitor a charter school's identification and evaluation processes for student populations suspected of having disabilities.
- Transportation services for all charter schools should be consistent with those required for traditional public schools.
- Transportation waivers issued by the Louisiana Department of Education and the Board of Education should require a public process and provide the public with details outlining the reasons for the waiver.
- The determination of the location of a charter school should be a priority for the authorizer, and a negotiation to determine the location of a charter school should take place between the authorizer (either the local school district or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education) and the charter school operator.
- Charter school authorization should be contingent upon a detailed review and impact analysis of enrollment across the school district in which a charter school applicant seeks approval.

Sex Education (*Adopted from LWV-Mississippi by concurrence, 2013*)

The LWVLA supports:

- a. Sex education programs in Louisiana public schools which include community awareness as well as specific preventative and follow-up services for pregnant teenagers.
- b. Comprehensive classroom instruction on human reproduction, parenting, sexual responsibility, and sexually transmitted diseases.
- c. Individual counseling and a district-wide policy of follow-up by school officials

Tenure (*Adopted from LWV-New Jersey by consensus, 2013*)

The LWVLA believes that changes in the present system of tenure are essential. It believes that:

- a. Tenure should be retained for teachers, but that modifications both to laws and procedures are necessary. Superintendents and principals should be removed from the coverage of tenure; provisions should be made for them to be covered by multi-year contracts.
- b. The most important modifications needed are those that will strengthen the evaluation process for both probationary and tenured teachers.
- c. The League supports measures that will expedite the dismissal process, making it less burdensome and more equitable.
- d. A reexamination of seniority regulations as they apply to reductions in force is needed.

Value of Public Education (*Adopted from LWV-New Jersey by concurrence, 2013*)

The LWVLA believes the universal education that public schools provide is essential to a democratic society. A private school voucher system will undermine and weaken public schools by reducing fiscal and human resources and community support. LWVLA believes that the public school system can provide choice that will serve a far greater number of students and be designed to reduce stratification and segregation.

MEMBER-SUGGESTED PROGRAM AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Declare “Racism a Public Health Crisis” and support a proposal to pursue a statewide Resolution or Proclamation (*Adopted by the LWWLA Convention, February 27, 2021*)

Rationale: This proposal supports the League's goal for 2019-2021 Transformation Roadmap and its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy. The American Public Health Association (APHA) notes that “declarations are an important first step ...to advance racial equity and justice and...the allocation of resources and strategic action must follow.” Systemic and structural changes are needed to address the implicit biases and structural racism which is a major social determinant of health outcomes.

American Medical Association policy recognizes racism as a public health threat. Leagues in Florida and California support passing such instruments in their communities. APHA lists 29 states, cities and counties that declared racism a public health crisis or emergency.

Racism is germane to Louisiana given its past and present stance. Currently black and marginalized people are bearing the brunt of the pandemic. Sen. Boudreaux, Lafayette, said “The Pandemic has exposed many things about who we are and how we address or do not address the inequities across our state”. He was speaking about tremendous losses in his own family.

The Legislative session will certainly bring another round of attempts to target the healthcare budget. Our Declaration may be a way to elevate the issues of health, racial disparity, and economic justice.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly!” - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Report of the Nominating Committee

To develop the slate of candidates for the LWVLA Convention, the Nominating Committee followed the following selection process:

- Considered the needs for an incoming board
- Developed a list of characteristics and skills desirable for board members
- Revised the formal application form, adding additional open-ended questions for written response
- Contacted all members seeking candidates for nominees
- Agreed upon the candidate best suited for each office and invited that candidate to run for that office

All candidates have agreed to run for the listed office.

Proposed List of Nominees for 2023-2025

For Officers

President	M. Christian Green (Lafayette)
Vice President	Bonnie Schmidt (St. Tammany)
Secretary	Alicia Chaisson (Lafayette)
Treasure	Yvonne Mitchell-Grubb (New Orleans)

For Board of Directors (four elected positions)

Director	Sylvia Johnson (St. Tammany)
Director	Wendy King (New Orleans)
Director	Giselle Proby-Bryant (Caddo-Bossier)
Director	Patrice Sentino (New Orleans)

For Nominating Committee

Chair	DeVoe Allen (St. Tammany)
Member	Alfred Doucette, Jr. (State Member)
Member	Kathleen Schott Espinoza (Lafayette)

Respectfully submitted by the 2023-2025 Nominating Committee:

Wendy King, chair
DeVoe Allen
Alicia Chaisson
Alfred Doucette, Jr.
Ellen Torgrimson

Nominee for President: M. Christian Green



Christian Green holds degrees from Georgetown University in history and government, Emory University in law and theology, and the University of Chicago in religion and ethics. She has taught at DePaul University, Harvard Divinity School, and the Candler School of Theology. She has been a researcher at the Religion, Culture, and Family Project at the University of Chicago, the Park Ridge Center for the Study of Health, Faith, and Ethics in Chicago, and the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. She is currently a Senior Fellow and Research Director on Law, Religion and Human Rights at the Center for the Study of Law and Religion at Emory University, an editor of the *Journal of Law and Religion*, and editor and publications manager for the *African Consortium for Law and Religion Studies* (ACLAES). Christian is a member of LWV Lafayette and previously served as LWVLA Vice President.

Email: :m.christian.green@gmail.com

Nominee for Vice President: Bonnie Schmidt



Bonnie Schmidt has been a member of LWVST for ten years. She has been active in many social justice efforts and was formerly the chair of the League's Criminal Justice Committee. She holds a BA from Youngstown University and an M.ED in Rehabilitation Counseling from Kent State. She has been director of rehabilitation counseling at Goodwill Industries, Regional Sales Manager at Lifeline Systems, and Executive Director of the Senior Citizen's Council of Lake County. She is currently the co-chair of the Unitarian Universalist Ukrainian Relief Fund, having brought three Ukrainian refugees to St. Tammany Parish.

Email: bjsblossom@icloud.com

Nominee for Secretary: Alicia Chaisson



Alicia Chaisson was the Spokesperson for LWV Lafayette from 2017 to 2020, for which she earned the Innovator Award for spearheading the first Spanish language voter guide and increasing visibility through social media, press releases, and speaking at council meetings. She was honored by the Lafayette 705 in 2019 as a recipient of the 20 Under 40: Young Leadership Award. She was a candidate for Lafayette City-Parish Council in 2015. Alicia is a talented Theatre teacher for Lafayette Parish. She earned her BFA in drama at New York University, Tisch School of the Arts, graduating in 2006 with honors and merit scholarships. From 2008 to 2011, as an active ensemble member of the New York Neo-Futurists; she wrote, directed, and performed in their signature show, *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind*. Since moving to Lafayette in 2011, Alicia has directed, written, consulted, acted, or performed in over 20 productions at the professional, university, and community level. She loves using her theatrical and organizational skills to further the mission of the League.

Email: aliciajeanchaisson@gmail.com

Nominee for Treasurer: Yvonne Mitchell-Grubb



Yvonne Mitchell-Grubb is an LWVNO board member and currently serves as treasurer. She is a consultant with expertise in information technology, project management, and political campaigns. Yvonne was previously an information technology manager for McDermott, Inc. and Lockheed Martin, and Community Relations Manager for Harrah's New Orleans. She is involved in education, business and community organizations and has served on the boards of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce, Algiers Economic Development Foundation and Committee for a Better New Orleans; and was recognized as a Young Leadership Council Role Model in 2006. She is engaged in leadership roles with other civic organizations such as the Pontchartrain Chapter of Links; National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Independent Women's Organization; the Algiers Neighborhood Presidents Council; and Walnut Bend Civic Association.

Email: yvonnemg@aol.com

Nominee for Board of Directors: Wendy King



Wendy King is an LWV New Orleans Board member and has been active in area environmental issues since the late 1970s. She joined the Sierra Club in 1977, shortly before graduating from Loyola University. Her volunteer work for the Sierra Club has included editing the Chapter and Group newsletters, being treasurer of the New Orleans Group, and currently chairing the New Orleans Group's Waste and Recycling committees, plus being the New Orleans Group Excomm's secretary. For LWVNO, she has met with other environment committee members to discuss issues and actions her committee can work on. She is currently the LWVLA State Environment Committee Chair and has followed the legislature's environmental legislation each session.
Email: _wking@tulane.edu

Nominee for Board of Directors: Sylvia Johnson



Having worked in the public and private sectors, Sylvia Johnson has extensive experience in law, business and social services. Also, she has lived and worked in more than a dozen countries for the U.S. State Department. She consults with small businesses on personnel and property issues. Sylvia has long been an advocate for voter registration and fair access to vote. She serves as a community volunteer with the elderly and the disabled. A current resident of St. Tammany Parish, Sylvia is a native of South Carolina. She holds academic degrees from Duke University and Loyola University of the South. Sylvia is a member of League of Women Voters of St Tammany and she worked with VOTE 411 for the State League.
Email: sjohns1768@gmail.com

Nominee for Board of Directors: Gisele Proby-Bryant



Gisele Proby-Bryant is a licensed Speech Pathologist in the state of Louisiana and is recognized for her expertise in school law, and advocating for people with disabilities. She retired after 35 years of service as Bossier Parish Schools Director of Special Education and Federal Programs; her strong mentorship skills have propelled the next generation of educational leaders to influential positions, leaving an enduring legacy of excellence that continues to shine brightly into the lives of others. Gisele earned BA and MA degrees from Northwestern State University and received certification in Educational Leadership with 30 hours above her master's degree from Centenary College. Gisele was recently appointed to serve on the Caddo Parish Juvenile Justice Board to reimagine the criminal justice system. She is the past president of the Arc Caddo Bossier and Board of Director for Louisiana Arc supporting people with disabilities to help them reach their fullest potential. Gisele served as a member of the LWVLA PPFM working group and currently serves as president of LWV Caddo Bossier.
Email: gpbryant58@yahoo.com

Nominee for Board of Directors: Patrice Sentino



Dr. Patrice Sentino is a native of Chicago, Illinois who moved to New Orleans in 1982. She has served as an educator, clinician, community organizer, and researcher. She works with New Orleanians who are affected by social and environmental trauma, high-risk for juvenile delinquency, homelessness, mental illness, and behavioral health. She holds a Doctorate of Social Work from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, a Master of Social Work from Southern University at New Orleans, and a Bachelor of Substance Abuse and Addition Counseling from Southern University at New Orleans. She is currently continuing pursuing an Education Doctorate Degree in Educational Psychology and Technology at Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Presently she is the CEO of the Center for Hope Children and Family Services. Patrice is a member of LWV New Orleans.
Email: centerforhoperehab@nocoxmail.com

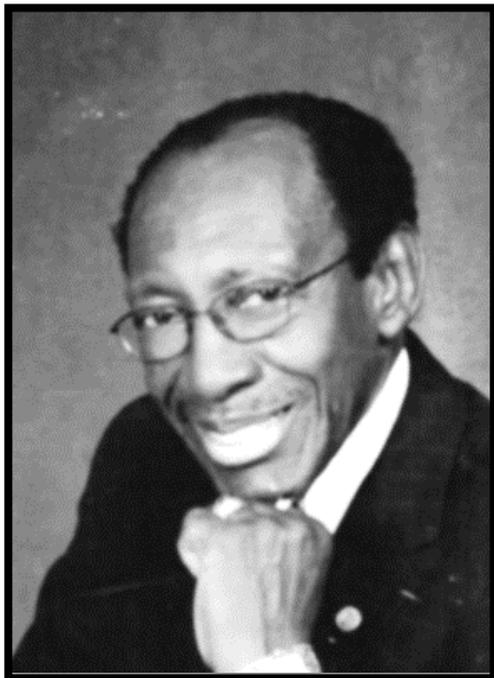
Nominee for Chair of the Nominating Committee: DeVoe Potter Allen



DeVoe Potter Allen currently serves as a co-chair of LWV-St. Tammany Parish, as well as chair of the local Environmental Committee. She received a BA and an MA in Psychology from Southeastern Louisiana University. She retired after a career of 25 years with the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, Child Welfare Division. Post retirement, she worked as a school psychologist with a private pupil appraisal team that contracted with charter schools in New Orleans, LA. DeVoe is a passionate advocate for children and families. She also advocates to environmentally sustainable development and protections for all aspects of the earth's environment.

Email: nanavoe@bellsouth.net

Nominee for the Nominating Committee: Alfred Doucette, Jr.



Alfred Doucette, Jr. is a past President and Vice President of LWV Lake Charles. He is the chaplain of the Louisiana Black History Hall of Fame and is a past President and Vice President of Toastmaster International 1225. In Lake Charles he serves on the Mayor's Commission of Armed Forces and is a member of the Mayor's Commission of Disability. Alfred is a life member and a past Commander of Chapter 17, Disabled American Veterans. He earned an AA degree in computer information system specialist and application specialist from Sowela Technical College. Alfred is a State Member and has served two terms on the LWVLA Board of Directors.

Email: douce6539@gmail.com

Nominee for the Nominating Committee: Kathleen Schott Espinoza



Kathleen Schott Espinoza has been an instructor of Geography at the University of Louisiana Lafayette since 2007. In addition to a full-time teaching load, she has served on numerous committees and currently is part of an effort to promote and integrate Geographic Information Systems (GIS) education into undergraduate programs at the university. In the community Kathleen serves as a member of a parish wide effort to support Lafayette Parish Public Schools and is a board member of a foundation that supports the Vermilionville Living History Museum. Kathleen has been a League member for over a decade and has served for several years as a member of the Lafayette League's leadership Team. She has also served as LWVLA education chair and led a statewide committee to study charter schools in Louisiana, resulting in a policy adoption by LWVLA in 2019. She has long been inspired by the people she has met and worked with who shine light on important issues and help to create places where public discourse and decision-making can happen effectively.

Email: kspinoza@gmail.com

Acknowledgments

LWVLA Board of Directors 2021-2023

Hilda Walker Thomas, President
M. Christian Green, Vice President
Ellen Torgrimson, Secretary
Amanda Couvillon, Treasurer
DeVoe Allen, Director
Rhonda Gleason, Director
Laurie Foley Jones, Director
Patrice Santino, Director

Chairs of LWVLA Standing Committees, 2021-2023

Criminal Justice Committee: Joanne Pettit
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Donna Howland
Education Committee: M. Christian Green, DeVoe Allen
Environment Committee: Wendy King
Healthcare Committee: Linda Hawkins, Patrice Sentino
Voting Rights Committee: M. Christian Green
Voter Services Committee: Vacant
Women's Issues Committee: Rosalind Blanco Cook

Members of PPFM Working Group, 2022

Hilda Walker Thomas	Carol DeVille	Joanne Pettit
M. Christian Green	Laurie Foley Jones	Gisele Proby-Bryant
DeVoe Allen	Rhonda Gleason	Lois Scheib
Rosalind Blanco Cook	Wendy King	Bonnie Schmidt
Joyce Corrington	Ann Manger	Ellen Torgrimson

In Memoriam

LWV New Orleans

Carolyn Malek	Joel Myers
Helen Malin	Sara Stone
Anne Meese	Sylvia Warren