

The League of Women Voters of Alameda

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www.LWVAlameda.org

The VOTER is published by the LWVA Communications Committee. Current and past issues of the VOTER are posted on LWVAlameda.org.

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The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government. We work to raise understanding of major policy issues and influence public policy through education. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and on which a consensus has been reached. In an era of proliferating powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.

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VOTER

Promoting Political Responsibility through Informed
and Active Participation

Volume 49, Number 6, November-December 2017

VOTER CONTENTS: Calendar p. 2; President's Message, Board News, Membership Update, p.3; Youth Outreach Update, National Voter Registration Day p. 4; Immigration Nation p. 5; State Legislation Wrap-up, Preparing Women to Run for Office p. 6; Programs for Women Running for Office p.7.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF ALAMEDA

What's happening to our voting rights?

Voter suppression & the politics
of exclusion



Thursday November 9, 7:00-9:00 PM
ELKS LODGE, 2255 Santa Clara, Alameda
"Lodge Room" second floor

KIM GERON, California State University East Bay
HELEN HUTCHISON, President, LWV California
MICHAEL CHASE, ACLU Northern California

Forum Co-sponsor:
League of Women Voters OAKLAND
Info: www.lwvalameda.org/calendar.html

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html for more information

- FRI. NOV. 3**
5:30pm-7:00pm
FIRST FRIDAY SOCIAL DINNER. Panera Bread, 2249 South Shore Center, Alameda. Join members/guests for good food and conversation! RSVP by 2 NOV: anne@youreastbayagent.com or 407-0175.
- THU. NOV. 9**
7:00pm-9:00pm
COMMUNITY FORUM: What's Happening to Our Voting Rights? Elks Lodge (second floor), 2255 Santa Clara, Alameda. Speakers include Kim Geron, Political Science Professor at CSU East Bay; Helen Hutchison, President of the LWV of California; and Michael Chase of the ACLU. Cosponsored with LWV Oakland.
- SAT. NOV. 11**
10:00am
NEW MEMBER COFFEE. Peet's Coffee & Tea inside Nob Hill Grocery, 2531 Blanding Avenue, Alameda. Calling all new members of 2016-2017 to join us for coffee and conversation!
- THU. NOV. 16**
7:00pm-9:00pm
LWVA BOARD MEETING. Alameda Hospital, Room C (first floor). All League members are welcome to attend.
- SUN. NOV. 19**
4:00pm-6:00pm
MEET YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS (MYPO) PLANNING. Panera Bread, 2249 South Shore Center, Alameda. MYPO is our yearly (spring) fundraiser that helps us raise money for public forums and youth outreach. Come to this planning session and find out how you can help!
- SUN. DEC. 3**
5:00pm-8:00pm
LWVA HOLIDAY PARTY for members and guests at 1506 Eastshore Drive, Alameda. Bring a dish or wine/nonalcoholic drinks to share!
- MON. DEC. 4**
3:00pm-4:30pm
BOOK CLUB. Like Dreamers: The Story of the Israeli Paratroopers Who Reunited Jerusalem and a Divided Nation, by Yossi Klein Halevi. **Applebee's Restaurant**, 2263 South Shore. Information: Felicez@ymail.com.
- FRI. JAN. 5**
5:30pm-7:00pm
FIRST FRIDAY SOCIAL DINNER. Place TBA. Join members and guests for good food and conversation! No-host. RSVP by 4 JAN 2018 to anne@youreastbayagent.com or 407-0175.
- THU. JAN. 18**
7:00pm-9:00pm
LWVA BOARD MEETING. Alameda Hospital, Room C (first floor). All League members are welcome to attend.
- MON. JAN. 22**
3:00pm-4:30pm
BOOK CLUB. Book to be announced. Applebee's Restaurant, 2263 South Shore. Information: Felicez@ymail.com.
- SAT. JAN. 27**
LWVA GENERAL MEETING – PROGRAM PLANNING.
Place/time: TBA. All League members are welcome to attend.



President's Message – by Georgia Gates Derr

Recently, my son and I exchanged a heated text-message conversation about our nation's *grand experiment in democracy*. Sadly, like many, he has become cynical; frustrated with politics and alarmed at the polarization. He thinks the American experiment may be on the verge of collapse. In a loving motherly way, I admonished him by exclaiming, "Don't you dare give up on our democracy; you must fight the good fight!" Democracy is slow and cumbersome, it takes commitment and hard work, but it does work. I urged him to read President Obama's speech on the 50th Anniversary of the Marches from Selma and I encourage you to do so as well. I've highlighted a section below (full text at <http://time.com/3736357/barack-obama-selma-speech-transcript/>):

What greater expression of faith in the American experiment than this; what greater form of patriotism is there; than the belief that America is not yet finished, that we are strong enough to be self-critical, that each successive generation can look upon our imperfections and decide that it is in our power to remake this nation to more closely align with our highest ideals?

President Obama reminds us that our founding documents are a call to action and a roadmap for citizenship. For nearly 100 years, the League of Women Voters has answered that call to action. We work to encourage active and informed citizen participation in our government and we advocate for measures that benefit our communities and help protect our democracy.

Together we will continue to fight the good fight!

Board News – by Georgia Gates Derr

- The LWVA's Nonpartisan Policy and Diversity Policy were revised and approved at the 21 September Board of Directors meeting.
- An excellent Board Training Workshop was held on 7 October, led by our Management and Training Advisor (MTA) Lianne Campodonico.
- With regret, Linda Asbury and Patricia Young submitted their resignations from the Board due to personal/professional commitments. We are grateful for their leadership and service to the League.
- We welcome new Board Member and Fundraising Chair, Douglas Neu. His excellent computer skills, proven leadership abilities, and enthusiasm for the work of the League will be an asset.
- A very special thank-you to Shubha Fansle! She has been the "keeper" of the LWVA database for several years and in order to retire, she graciously trained Doug Neu to take over the job. Shubha will continue to serve as the Health Care Committee Chair.

Membership Update – by Doris Gee

We welcome Ricka Stoelting and Carol Blomberg as new members! The LWVA now totals 177 (including family memberships.) If you have friends or family who want to join, it's easy. Go to our website or email dorisgee48@gmail.com. Join today to get paid membership through 31 December 2018.

The Membership Committee is a fun and active group. Linda Garvin and Ken Werner have hosted two wonderful beer/wine gatherings attended by many current and potential members. We meet regularly the last



Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting is 29 Nov at 9am (but no meeting in December.)

On a sad note, we announce the passing of League member Jim Groh on 26 October. Lynn Groh and family are requesting no phone calls at this time.



Youth Outreach Update – by Alice Fried

The LWVA/College of Alameda (COA) Civics Scholarship Program is preparing for its third annual high school student tournament on 13 April 2018. This year's speech contest topic is: *Should Immigration Include a Path to Citizenship and Focus on Family?* Like last year, participants can win a \$1,000 or a \$500 scholarship. But instead of earning just one non-transferable college credit, they get three that will transfer to a university. Students can earn 12 credits over four years in high school if selected to repeat the program. I am reaching out to grant resources and other

organizations to help raise money for scholarships. In 2018, we also expect to launch the LWVA/COA Communications Internship Program. Right now, COA is working to make it into a transferable credit course. Volunteers for Youth Outreach are sorely needed! Contact me at alicefried89@gmail.com.

National Voter Registration Day (NVRD)- by Ken Werner

Fourteen enthusiastic LWVA volunteers worked in shifts over an 11-hour period on NVRD (26 September.) They handed out voting information and persuaded people to register to vote at four Alameda locations: the Main Street Ferry Terminal, Alameda High School, the Farmers' Market, and the Main Library.

Many voter registrations were completed on paper at the Market, some on-line at the library, and at least 40

on-line at the

high school. We even had 16 and 17 year-old students who pre-registered ahead of their 18th birthday!

But we couldn't have done it without our determined and engaged volunteers: Kate Quick, Lisa Yap, Sally Faulhaber, Shelly Reed, Karen Wellman, Felice Zensius, Shuba Fanse, Heather Fowler-Salamini, Keasha Martindill, Karen Guthrie, Doris Gee, Maria Dominguez, Georgia Gates Derr, Juelle-Ann Boyer (co-team lead), and Ken Werner (co-team lead.)

This year's NVRD was a very positive effort and we look forward to getting more voters engaged for future elections. Thanks to our volunteers and the receptive citizens of Alameda!



Immigration Nation? A Challenge for All Americans - by Mari Clark

On 27 September, over 50 people assembled at the Alameda Library to participate in a panel discussion on immigration with five distinguished authorities. The LWVA, American Association of University Women (AAUW) Alameda chapter, and Friends of the Alameda Free Library co-sponsored this event.

Penny Washbourn, president of the AAUW chapter, served as moderator. She began by recommending the children's book *Her Right Foot* by Dave Eggers. In this book about the Statue of Liberty, the author notes the statue's right foot appears to be in mid-stride and asks the reader to consider the symbolism. The moderator also referenced a recent article in the San Francisco Chronicle headlined: "The Imaginary Immigrant Hordes." It said that 13.4% of people in the United States were born abroad in 2015, while the public perceived a higher percentage of immigrants.



Laura Fantone, an immigration historian and UC Berkeley lecturer, presented key developments in federal policies since the large influx of immigrants in the mid-1850s. Fantone said the perception that most immigrants are Mexican is not true. She explained that the number of immigrants from China to the U.S. has surpassed both Mexico and India. Fantone also remarked that the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 stayed in effect for a long time; it was not repealed until 1943.

Panelist Pratheepan Gulasekaram is a law professor at Santa Clara University, and an expert on the political and legal dynamics of state and local immigration regulations and their effect on federal policies. He reviewed the 1889 case of *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* in which the Supreme Court affirmed the Chinese Exclusion Act. This ruling, he added, is still cited in support of the federal government's plenary powers in the area of immigration. Gulasekaram also said discussion about the federal government's powers was renewed (two days before this event) when an executive order restricting immigration was expanded to include travelers from Chad, Venezuela, and North Korea.

The Alameda County Supervisor, Wilma Chan, had planned to participate but fell ill. Her legislative aide, Vanessa Cedeño, spoke in her place. She said there is no legal definition of "sanctuary" and that it has evolved to refer to policy where state or local law enforcement decline to cooperate with federal immigration officials. In Alameda County, she said that one in every three residents is an immigrant, and most are naturalized citizens. She added that there are 100,000 undocumented residents in the county, and 11,000 of those are Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals-eligible. Cedeño also said Chan was in favor of SB 54, a landmark "sanctuary state" law. (Governor Brown signed it on 5 October.)

Panelist Reverend Deborah Lee of the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity works with 30 faith communities to accompany and advocate for the fair treatment and dignity of immigrants. She said the extractive economies are displacing residents of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Silver and gold mining are familiar examples, but Lee also noted the impact of hydroelectric power. She presented material describing how multinational companies and military aid has led to human rights abuses.

The final speaker was Amos White of the ACLU and the Alameda People Power Movement. White compared the immigrants' rights struggles to the 1960s-era civil right struggles in America. White reminded us through examples, such as the noose incident at Alameda High School and the defacing of a mosque and a synagogue, that racist events have not ended.

2017 California Legislative Session Wrap-up – Edited from LWVC eBlast of 16 Oct

This year’s legislative session ended with big wins. Governor Brown signed all League-supported bills that made it to his desk: read more at <https://goo.gl/3ru5KA>. Our major victories include the following.

- AB 249, California Disclose Act: Campaign ads must now clearly identify their big money donors.
- AB 705, Student Success Act: Community Colleges must facilitate their students’ ability to complete transfer level coursework in Math and English within a one-year timeframe. Many of these students are currently tracked into unnecessary, non-credit remedial courses.
- AB 918: California Voting for All Act: Voters with limited English skills may ask for a facsimile ballot by mail, and bring a facsimile ballot in the polling booth. The Sacramento Bee (on 8/4/17) said this helps “hundreds of thousands of...immigrant voters to participate in our democracy.”
- SB 2: Building Homes and Jobs Act: It will require a \$75 fee on certain real estate recorded documents, and raise at least \$200 million annually for affordable housing in California.
- SB 3: Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond Act: This act places a \$4 billion dollar bond measure on the November 2018 ballot to fund affordable housing in California.
- SB 54, California Values Act: Local authorities will not ask about immigration status during routine interactions. The act also bans unconstitutional detainer requests, and prohibits local officials from acting as federal immigration agents.

The state legislature will be back in January. LWVA members, you all will now get Action Alert emails from the National/State Leagues. So check your junk mail regularly, and respond when you get an alert!

Preparing Women to Run for Office – by Keasha Martindill

Introduction - Women make up more than half of the U.S.’s population, but they hold less than a fourth of elected offices in Congress, in State Legislatures, as Statewide Elected Executives, etc. (See more at: <https://goo.gl/vIyf9g>.) Not enough women are running for office, and we need to bridge the gap.

The LWVA does not support or endorse any political party. However, we are providing information on partisan training programs here to inspire more women to seek office, or become politically active.

I recently spoke with Angela Hockabout (pictured left) who graduated this year from California’s Emerge program for Democratic women. We talked about her training and her thoughts on women running for office.



Interview - Last year’s election results grieved Angela. When she saw a Twitter ad about Emerge training, she said that she saw it as a “light of hope” and applied as a way to take action.

Normally, Emerge selects candidates by November each year. But donations poured in after the election, so they increased their number of trainees. She didn’t think she would be selected, as she isn’t a lawyer and hasn’t earned a Master’s degree. But Emerge saw her potential; Angela founded the Alameda Renter’s Coalition, and serves as Alameda Home Team’s Vice President.

Her cohort met one weekend a month for five months. Students may find it easy to fit this training into their work-life, but the course is challenging. Angela said it requires “lots of personal work, digging deep, coming to terms with your self.” She added that you must “look at your own assumptions and

institutional biases” and that trainees are given a “variety of perspectives” to consider.

When I asked which part of her training was most helpful, Angela replied, “The best thing was Christina Harbridge.” Ms. Harbridge, she explained, helps trainees communicate authentically and develop their best message to voters. To do this, Angela said you must “get to the heart of people’s pain.”

Emerge has prepared her to run for office, but she is not ready mainly for family and financial reasons. For now, she would rather join a local board or commission, and work on others’ political campaigns.

I asked her why more women don’t run. Angela’s first response was that the choice to run could be difficult for anyone. That decision, she said, can be “anxiety inducing” as you can greatly impact the lives of others. She added that candidates must be “ok with being uncomfortable all the time and making hard decisions.” Another barrier to public service, she said, is that elected officials make personal sacrifices when they go from being a “private to a public individual...no-one can have it all.”

Angela also said “society conditions women to not speak up, to not run.” She felt her opinion was discounted, and point of view discredited in corporate settings solely due to her gender. To win public office, she said that women must be “emphatic and determined.” She also said you must wait for the right opportunity, as “choosing your first race carefully is the best marker of success.”

More importantly, Angela strongly believes “you can have political power without running for office.” Many women, she said, have made an impact in Alameda by simply speaking at City Council meetings. She has put this into practice, and helped make affordable housing a top concern for local officials. If you want to be politically active, she said to “just do it, start!”

Training – For women who want to run for office, here are a few programs to consider.

The National Federation of Republican Women (NFRW) is the women’s wing of the Republican Party, and they train female candidates through their Campaign Management School. Training sessions typically last a day, and the cost is \$100.

<http://www.nfrw.org/cms>.

Emerge America is a nonprofit that helps elect Democratic women. California is one of 22 states that provide this 70-hour program. The fee to apply is \$50, and the tuition is \$1,500 (but up to 50% financial aid may be available.). Apply Summer 2018 for the next class. <http://www.emergeca.org>.

N.O.B.E.L. Women, another nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, was created to increase and promote black women in government. They offer an intense, yearlong program for a group of 25 or more. The application fee is \$100, and tuition is \$5,000, with some scholarships available. <http://nobel-women.org>.

Ready to Run is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization affiliated with Rutgers University’s Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP). There are 20 state programs and training varies from one day to six weeks. Registration fees range from \$25 to \$100. Mount Saint Mary’s University in L.A. provides training at their campus. http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education_training/ready_to_run/overview.

Vote Run Lead is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that offers training to women. Their instruction varies between a few hours and three days, and is held in cities throughout the nation. The next session is set for 17-19 November in Minneapolis, MN, and the cost to register is \$195. <https://voterunlead.org>.

