

THE VOTER



This Newsletter published by and for the
League of Women Voters of Yakima County
PO Box 723, Yakima, WA 98907 509-452-3419

*We respectfully acknowledge
that we are on the traditional
land of the Yakama People.*

July, 2022
Vol.22, No 4

MISSION STATEMENT:

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

VISION:

We envision a democracy
where every person has the desire,
the right, the knowledge, and the confidence
to participate.

VALUE STATEMENT:

The League believes in the power of women to
create a more perfect democracy.

Officers

President: Lee Murdock
Secretary: Betty Van Ryder
Treasurer and Membership:
Janis Luvaas

Leadership Team

Dori Baker-Peralta
Criss Bardill
Quinn Dalan
Steve Hill
Kitty Jubran
Susan Kaphammer
Cheri Kilty
Karri Livingston
Karen Pilon

Voter Editor: Susan Kaphammer
509-949-0127; susanlkap@gmail.com

The Board currently meets at 4:30 PM,
usually the first Monday of the month at the
YWCA, 818 W Yakima Ave, Yakima.

All members are welcome.

CALENDAR



Tuesday, August 2 – Primary Election!

In-person registration and voting until 4:00 PM (8 PM on
election day) at County Courthouse, Auditor's Office...or
Ballots postmarked via Postal Service as of Aug. 2...or
Ballots deposited in Ballot Drop Box by end of day.

August 6-7 – Power Building Through Elections Virtual
Institute provided by OneAmerica; training about
community organizing. *See flyer attached to this issue.*

On-Going

1st Monday of Each Month 4:30 PM – *Next meeting on*
August 1: Leadership Team Meeting at YWCA, 818 W
Yakima Ave, Yakima. Contact Lee Murdock if prefer to
meet by Zoom.



Community Conversations

...offered to League members and the public.
On hiatus for July and August; Conversations
will resume on the 4th Tuesday of September.
Topic and details to follow.

The June Conversation about the Yakima Domestic Violence Coalition

with Lt. Chan Janis
of the Yakima Police Department
can be viewed on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/LWVYC>



The information is also summarized
in this issue of *The Voter*.

Message from LWVYC President...

LEE MURDOCK ASSUMES PRESIDENCY

Hello members and friends of the League of Women Voters of Yakima County. I want to first of all express my gratitude for the Leadership provided by Cheri Kilty this past year – her commitment to this community was infectious and made me excited to serve in this new role. This first month has been a whirlwind as we are working to structure the committees and prepare for the work ahead.

I also want to offer my gratitude to Karen Pilon who has served as the Secretary of the League for multiple years. I am so lucky to be surrounded by so many experienced members who hold the history of this organization. Congratulations to Betty Van Ryder who will be taking on this role moving forward. I was recruited into the League by Rhonda Hauff 4 years ago – while we are sad to see her transition off the Leadership Team, we are grateful to continue to have her as an active member. I also want to welcome Karri Livingston to the Leadership Team and serving as our Voter Services Committee chair – keep an eye out for e-mail from her as we move into the mid-term elections. I also want to welcome Steve Hill and Dori Peralta Baker to the Leadership Team.

While I am still relatively new to this organization, my commitment and passion to my community is not. As I mentioned at the Annual Meeting, being elected as the President this year was a huge honor – 100 years ago, my great-grandmother, Tillie Paul Tamaree (Kah-tah-ah) was arrested for inducing an Indian, not entitled to vote, to vote at an election. In 1922, she assisted a Tlingit relative in voting, which was considered a felony due to the fact that Native Americans were not automatically considered U.S. citizens at that time. The relative was tried in court and represented by my Great-Uncle William Paul (Shgúndi). Jones was acquitted and Native American people were given the right to vote, setting a precedent that was soon solidified in the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924. Being adopted, I never had the honor of meeting them, but their legacy holds heavy on my heart.

In the last mid-term election in Yakima County – only 4 out of 10 adults voted. The reasons why people aren't voting is varied, but I fear the biggest barrier is apathy and lack of involvement in the process. One of my favorite quotes is from an Ecuadorian author and essayist Juan Montalvo – “There is nothing harder than the softness of indifference”. Moving forward we are committed to combat that indifference through inclusion, education, organization, and ease of access. If you haven't yet joined a committee, please do – if you haven't yet recruited a friend or neighbor to the league, please do. In the words of one of my favorite organizations that is no longer with us, For a Better Tomorrow: “If not us, who? If not now, when?”

- Lee Murdock

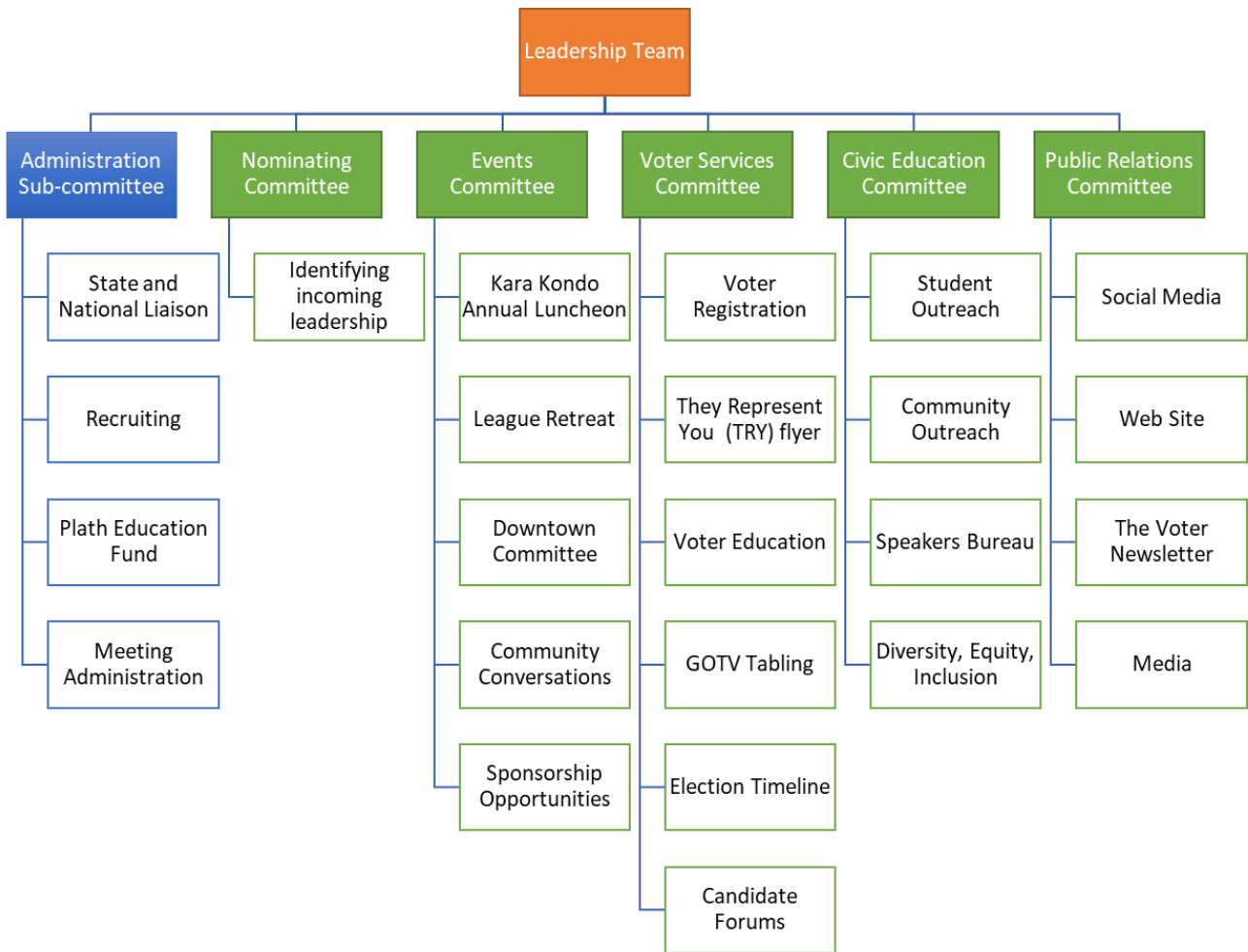
LWVYC Organization...

LOCAL LEAGUE REFINING STRUCTURE

Our Leadership Team has been working to clarify the Leadership Structure with emphasis on functioning committees. A flow chart representing this structure is presented on the next page.

The discussion about shared leadership began prior to this year's annual meeting and election of officers. After a couple of years of limited engagement in the midst of the covid restrictions, the Team recognized the need to share responsibilities among the Leadership Team and general membership. Now with an expanded Leadership Team and prompting from our new president, Lee Murdock, activities have been identified under several committees. (*See graphic on next page.*)

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LOCAL LEAGUE REFINING STRUCTURE... (Continued from Page 2)

As activities gear up this election year, committees will be the arenas for planning and carrying out our events. Regular meetings currently scheduled include: Leadership Team – the first Monday of the month; Voter Services – the first Friday of the month; and Admin Committee the fourth Tuesday of the month. The Leadership Team will receive reports of committee work to provide coordination and support for our overall efforts.

Members are encouraged to check into the committee work for Events, Voter Services, Civic Education or Public Relations. In addition, we are looking for members interested in helping develop and/or maintain a LWVYC website. Let any member of the Team know what matches your interests and passion for a stronger community!

LWVYC Leadership...

NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT BUSY

Lee Murdock began her term as our president by familiarizing herself with League documents such as our Bylaws, noting some adjustments needed in terms of office and composition of the nominating committee. The Leadership Team voted to bring our practice into compliance with our Bylaws. Our past presidents Cheri Kilty and Criss Bardill as well as our secretary, Janis Luvaas, have assisted in Lee’s transition.

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NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT... (Continued from Page 3)

Both the National and our State League encourage local responses to the Supreme Court's overturning of the constitutional right to abortion. Lee Murdock developed and distributed our LWVYC statement in emails to our local league members and friends and as a guest column in the July 4, 2022, *Yakima Herald-Republic*. The statement begins, "The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices." You can read more about the history of the League's position on this issue by going here: <https://lwvc.org/position/reproductive-choices>. Lee quoted the LWVUS President Dr. Deborah Turner and CEO Virginia Kase Solomon regarding the devastating consequences of the decision, including disproportionate impact on people of color and low-income residents, as well as the increased threat to other rights based on privacy. Their full statement is available at: <https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/supreme-court-strips-americans-constitutional-right-abortion-dobbs-v>. Finally, our local response states, "The League of Women Voters of Yakima County stands in solidarity with the League of Women Voters of the United States in support."

Lee logged into the Delegates meeting of the National League Convention for discussions of Bylaw proposals. *See more about our National Convention in the article on page 6.*

Lee spoke with people from Voter Services Committee for the League in Spokane. They provide programs with Naturalization Ceremonies, including in Yakima at the William O. Douglas Federal Building on August 12 at 11 AM, October 14 at Noon, and December 15 at Noon. League member Ulla Whitmont and Lee met with Magaly Solis, Executive Director of La Casa Hogar, about voter services to participants in their citizenship classes. La Casa Hogar helps their graduates register to vote and supports them in the voting process. Our League can look into providing a Spanish Candidates Forum.

Additionally, Lee took time to visit a new member. She also worked with our Voter Services Committee for their meeting and with the editor of this newsletter. Her efforts, along with information from the Leadership Team and committees confirm renewed energy as our LWVYC pursues our mission of empowering voters and defending democracy.

June Community Conversation...

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COALITION FOCUSES EFFORTS

In introducing Lieutenant Chad Janis of the Yakima Police Department, Cheri Kilty reported that Yakima County has the highest rate of domestic violence in the state. Lt. Janis reviewed for the Community Conversation audience the development and operations of the Domestic Violence Coalition



that brings together agencies and individuals working to improve the community response to domestic violence incidents.

Convinced that domestic violence can be prevented, Lt. Janis and others knew a new approach was needed to change the consistently high rate. While domestic violence reports have always been taken seriously by the police and investigations have improved, there had been little progress in reducing the rate. About 35% of overall arrests in Yakima have been domestic violence-related. Most domestic violence incidents involve intimate partner violence, and police were finding significant numbers of repeat offenders. These concerns prompted a year ago the establishment of the

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COALITION... (Continued from Page 4)

Domestic Violence Coalition. With attention to researching best practices for intervention and collection of data for the Domestic Violence Intervention Project, the Coalition set about improving community response.

The involvement of working partners and the commitment to working together have been key to the Coalition. Early on, the YWCA was called upon to provide 24/7 response to police at incidents of domestic violence to provide an on-site advocate for the immediate needs of victims and connections for on-going support. Unfortunately, Lt. Janis noted, programs for offenders are not readily available, and offenders are often left to manage on their own except for criminal justice involvement.

On a daily basis, Coalition partners receive the police department report of incidents, followed by an 8:15 AM Zoom call to share information and coordinate response. Monthly meetings of the Coalition provide for sharing perspectives and developing a wholistic approach among an inclusive and expanding cross-section of the community including criminal justice, social services and community/business partners.

Police procedures have also evolved. A lethality assessment provides a standardized check of the degree of harm and threat. This lethality assessment and a supplemental domestic violence report had grown to seven or more pages officers needed to file. Now, a phone app streamlines the process and enables immediate transmission to the domestic violence work group at the police department.

Research shows that swift consequences reinforce the seriousness of violence and assures victims that something will be done. Police Department collaboration with the legal system has increased the filing rate and expedited warrants for arrest, sometimes occurring less than 24 hours after an incident. Yakima County District Court Probation has also dedicated two officers to domestic violence cases to increase accountability. Officers read a warning letter to offenders at the incident and again at the jail to emphasize that the offender will be a high priority for police response, and if violence is repeated the offender will be prosecuted for all incidents even if previously dismissed.

The Handle With Care component of the Intervention Program provides for daily reports to the Yakima School District of students present at domestic violence incidents, and has expanded to include children in vehicles stopped for driving under the influence. These reports to principals and counselors provide context for possible child behavior at school. Witnessing domestic violence can be a significant adverse childhood experience that puts children into survival mode, making learning more difficult and behavior more erratic. And the chance to stop violence down the road, Lt. Janis states, “starts with kids.”

Lt. Janis emphasized the role of data for assessing and improving the community response to domestic violence. Yakima Police Department data is available to all to view on the Intimate Partner Violence Dashboard at <https://yakima.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/05f039481ba445f09199a35363cfec64>. The dashboard shows that in the past 12 months, YPD dealt with 2,205 incidents, with occurrences in all geographic areas. In 75 incidents a weapon was used and in 94 incidents strangulations occurred. The most common victim injury was bruises, accounting for nearly 40% of observed injuries. In 250 cases, children were present. 788 suspects were arrested.

Data will continue to be collected and analyzed, and Lt. Janis expects trends will show gradual progress in reducing domestic violence in our community. He credits what he calls “extraordinary partners” from a large section of the community fully committed toward this goal.

The full Community Conversation in which Lt. Janis shared even more information and details is available on our LWVYC Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/LWVYC/videos/424926942838166>.

LWVUS National Convention...

EVENT AFFIRMS URGENCY OF LEAGUE WORK

More than a thousand in-person and online delegates heard from leaders for voting rights, marched in support of abortion justice, took care of League business, and committed to League goals. In opening remarks, Dr. Deborah Ann Turner, LWVUS Board President, drew on her experiences as an obstetrician/gynecologist and her commitment to democracy in her remarks: “We hold the power to create a more perfect democracy. Women’s rights are human rights, and we will continue to fight... This is the work that the League of Women Voters does.” She ended her speech with a call to our next “moonshot” goal: abolishing the Electoral College. She noted that “direct popular vote...is essential to representative government,” and the Electoral College weakens democracy.



Keynote remarks by Joy Reid, political analyst for MSNBC, reflects on the incomplete victory of voting rights for women. (See at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbk05LYpzWY&t=131s>

She names black suffragettes and heroines who, “worked to give all women the franchise, [but] they remained an asterisk on the 19th Amendment...that hung like a sign over a whites only water fountain, until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. And yet, here we are presently in the fight for our lives yet again to preserve our place as a democratic republic.” Noting that the “cancellation of women’s right to decide whether or not to give birth...[has]huge implications for women’s mental and physical health and economic well-being.... We

know that the greater your economic struggle the less likely you are to vote.” She names some of the state-instituted obstructions to voting and the failure of federal voting rights legislation. “Now, this is not about party preference, it’s about whether we will be a democracy or not.” Joy Reid challenges, “What are we going to do about it? Over the next few days at this convention, you brilliant folks are going to discuss exactly that. And the ideas and solutions you come up with will be crucial to ensuring that we continue to have free and fair elections in a not-perfect but full-of-potential America.”

An important document from the Convention is the 2020-2022 Biennium Report, linked online from “Notes from National” at <https://lwvwa.org/This-Month-in-the-League/12848658>, This report tallies the impact of League activities. Nationwide, 1.4 million people were engaged through People Powered Fair Maps, 10 thousand people received League training, League membership grew by 7%, and 35.8 voters were impacted

The strategic focus on Women Power Democracy included four areas: Democracy Truth Project, Expand the Franchise, Democracy Defense Fund, and People Powered Fair Maps™. (See graphic on page 7.) Continuing our systemic challenges to voting rights through advocacy, litigation, and organizing will build more trust in our elections, grow our electorate with equity, create fairness for voter access, and ensure community districting truly reflects our population.

The Biennium Report highlights progress in programs aimed at building a healthier, more inclusive League Network, including DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) Leadership, operations and culture. In conclusion, the Report acknowledges, “...a lot can happen in two years! We were challenged to be creative, persistent, and intentional in how we organized our efforts to align with our Strategic Framework. Leadership at all levels of League made it possible for us to succeed on behalf of voters even during a pandemic, while we simultaneously grew our prominence as a leading organization on voting rights.”

Advancing Our Strategic Focus from 2020-22 Biennium Impact Report, LWVUS



National, State and Local Voter Services...

VOTE411 PROVIDES ONLINE NONPARTISAN VOTER GUIDE

VOTE411 (<https://www.vote411.org/>) is committed to ensuring voters have the information they need to successfully participate in every election. Whether it's local, state or federal, every election is important to ensuring our laws and policies reflect the values and beliefs of our communities.

Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, VOTE411 is a "one-stop-shop" for election related information. It provides personalized, nonpartisan information to the public. Viewable in English and Spanish, a user can enter their home address to: See What's On Your Ballot, Check Your Voter Registration, Find Your Polling Place, Discover Upcoming Debates In Your Area, and Read Candidates' Statements.

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VOTE411 PROVIDES ONLINE NONPARTISAN VOTER GUIDE... (Continued from Page 7)



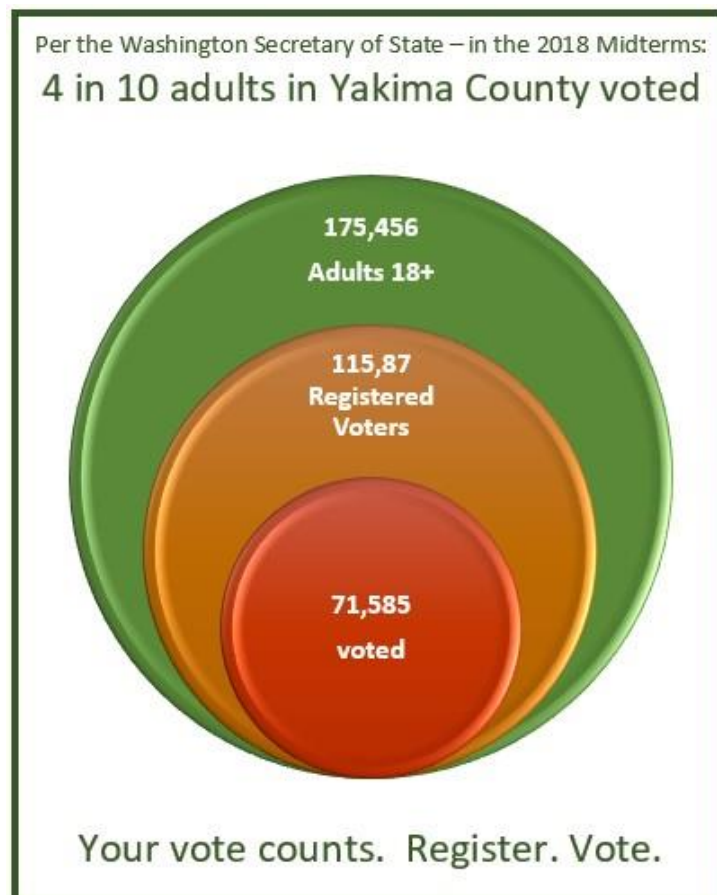
Additional features include ballot measure information when applicable, voter qualifications, links to register or check your registration, registration deadlines, election dates, and a checklist for new voters. In the past two years, over 6.5 million users around the nation visited VOTE411, including more than 420,000 Spanish page views.

In the Voter Guide section, all candidate responses to questions come directly from the candidates and are unedited by the League of Women Voters. Currently a number of candidates in local and state races have not yet responded with information for VOTE411. League members are encouraged to call upon candidates who have not answered the questions, reminding them that voters deserve information about their candidates before filling out their ballots. Let's try to get every general election candidate profiled on the site. And it is important to thank candidates who have answered the questions.

Check out VOTE411 yourself, and encourage others to use this tool for informed voting.

Voter Services Challenge...

WE CAN DO BETTER!



ONEAMERICA'S POWER
BUILDING INSTITUTE
PRESENTS:

POWER BUILDING THROUGH ELECTIONS

Come build immigrant power with us to move toward the thriving home that we deserve! At OneAmerica's Virtual Power Building Institute, a set of trainings about community organizing, you will learn how to build teams through electoral work and have transformational conversations with community members to support their journey as leaders

AUGUST 6 & 7
9 AM - 2 PM PST
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM
REGISTER: bit.ly/2022power

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN:



How to build power to change policies through intentional relationship building with voters and candidates running for office.



Have a greater understanding of your interest in our vision for a thriving home and your role in helping build a world where we thrive.



How to confidently connect with people when we knock on our neighbors' doors.



Methods of developing strong field plans and volunteer teams to win.

EXPECTATIONS WE HAVE OF YOU:



Fill out the registration form thoughtfully - your answers to our questions will help us plan more powerful trainings.



Attend all the sessions and be present and engage. Being present and engaging can look like having your video on and visually reacting to the training (nods, smiles, other facial expressions, etc.), asking questions or commenting in the chat, sharing Emojis like claps, hearts, etc.



Commit to doing your best to fulfill the next steps.



Talk with your organizer about alternatives if you cannot attend all of the sessions or complete all the next steps.

TRAININGS:



ADVANCING OUR ISSUES THROUGH ELECTIONS

We need elected officials who are from our communities who will serve as champions for our issues. We must identify our champion, and develop a strategic plan to cultivate a co-governing relationship with our representatives through the elections.



TALKING TO VOTERS & BUILDING OUR BASE

Transformational, not transactional, voter engagement is how we will build a movement from conversations with people at the doors. You will learn how to have meaningful conversations with people at the doors, and how to move people from the doors to a greater role within our work and community.



FIELD 101 TRAINING & PRACTICUM

We aim for an intentional number of doors that we knock on, number of door knocking shifts, and the number of voters we need to contact, to win. We will talk about how to determine the numbers for your field plan that you need to win, and have time for you to practice crunching the numbers, too.



BUILDING TEAMS

Effective and powerful teams do not happen by accident. Learn how to create a team structure that allows for volunteers to transform into leaders, that feels welcoming and inspiring, and that continues to expand.

YOUR COMMITMENT - NEXT STEPS AFTER TRAINING:

- Attend two deep canvasses near you.
- Follow up with 3+ people that you met at the doors during your deep canvass and request to meet them for a 1-1 the following week after you door knock.
- Discuss your one on ones with a OneAmerica organizer afterwards.

ACCESSIBILITY & SUPPORT:



We will provide interpretation in Spanish and Somali or Amharic. Please let us know 3 weeks in advance if you speak another language that is not represented here.



On the second day of the training, we will have small group discussions to process the information together and answer questions you have or ideas that you are still working on understanding.



A OneAmerica staffer will follow up with you after to debrief the training, the week following the Power Building Institute.

QUESTIONS? Contact info@weareoneamerica.org or the person who invited you!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WASHINGTON STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

The League of Women Voters is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy. We will actively work to remove barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF YAKIMA COUNTY

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

Cordially invites you to: JOIN US!

New Member Renewing Member

Name: _____

Membership Categories:

Address: _____

_____ \$10 Student

_____ \$60 Basic

Phone: _____

_____ \$40 Each added
family member at the same
residence

E-Mail: _____

Scholarships are available for potential members who cannot afford dues. Please contact us at yakimacountylwvyc@gmail.com

Additional Sustaining Gift: \$60 _____ \$40 _____ \$25 _____ Other: _____

Your Sustaining Gift will help support our local activities.

Make checks payable to: LWVYC And mail to: LWVYC, PO Box 723, YAKIMA WA 98907

Please note: Our fiscal year is July 1 through June 30. Initial dues received before December 31 will be subject to renewal on June 30 of the following year. Initial dues received after January 1 will be subject to renewal on June 30 of the year following that year.

Examples: a) Initial dues paid October 10, 2021; renewal date June 30, 2022
b) Initial dues paid February 24, 2022; renewal date June 30, 2023