Dear Friends,

What a year! As you read the 2015-16 Annual Report of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and the League of Women Voters Lotte E. Scharfman Memorial Fund, you will see that it describes a year filled with hard work and significant accomplishments.

You will also see that now, more than ever, America needs the League.

Is this true?

Ask yourself these questions: Does ensuring that every eligible citizen has the right to vote matter? In a flood of misinformation, misquotes, and sound bites, can providing impartial, accurate information from a trusted source make democracy work better? Is it important to have an organization that advocates for change based on detailed, impartial study of issues, rather than political calculation? Should citizens be encouraged to take action on the vital, local issues that affect them and their communities?

If your answer is yes to all these questions, go out and be the League....

Participate, find out what your local League is doing; help out. Talk to your friends, children, neighbors, co-workers; tell them about the League and ask them to join. Make a contribution to support the League’s work.

Get informed, get involved.

Now, more than ever, America needs the League. Now, more than ever, the League needs you!

In League,

Jean Cherdack
President

Meryl Kessler
Executive Director
Elections and Voting

To educate and engage voters during Election 2016, LWVMA launched MOVE 2016 (Massachusetts Voter Engagement 2016), a multi-pronged initiative designed to provide voters throughout the Commonwealth with resources to encourage participation and informed choice. We are grateful to the Lincoln and Therese Filene Foundation, the Salem Five Charitable Foundation, and an anonymous League member for financial support for this program.

The centerpiece of MOVE 2016 was our VOTE411.org Online Voters’ Guide, which allowed all Massachusetts voters to access personalized ballot information for both the state primary in September and then the general election in November. The guide covered the presidential, congressional, state legislature, sheriff, Governor’s Council, register of deeds, and county commissioner races (including candidates’ responses to questions created by LWVMA) and provided information on ballot measures, an online voter registration tool, local and state voting requirements and rules, and a polling place finder. Nearly 40,000 voters in 330 of the state’s 351 municipalities accessed the information in our Voter’s Guide.

With online registration and pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds newly available during the past election season, we created and distributed, with the help of local Leagues, over 10,000 postcards with easy-to-follow information about these changes to the election laws. We also updated and distributed our Voting in Massachusetts brochure, launched a social media campaign to encourage online registration and get out the vote, and ran a Get Out the Vote print ad in the Boston Globe right before the general election. Our League Choice Books program also helped encourage some of our youngest citizens to take an interest in elections and civic life.

As one of the sponsors of the Early Voting Challenge, LWVMA worked to encourage cities and towns to offer robust implementation of Massachusetts’ first early voting period ahead of the November 2016 general election. Working with other members of the Election Modernization Coalition, we tracked municipalities’ progress in implementing the early voting law and organized a ceremony at the Massachusetts State House to award gold and silver “medals” to municipalities that met or exceeded the statutory minimum requirements for early voting.

To mobilize the youth vote, we invited students to create short public service announcements for our annual high school video contest, which this year was entitled “YOUth Should Vote!” We received entries from more than 300 students from across Massachusetts, honored the winners at a State House ceremony, and shared their public service messages widely on social media during the weeks leading up to the election.

Finally, to ensure unimpeded access to polls throughout the state on Election Day, we participated in the Election Protection Coalition and helped station League members and other volunteers at polling places to observe and monitor the voting process.

Visitors of our “YOUth Should Vote!” Video Contest at the State House

Our Boston Globe Get Out the Vote ad from October 2016
Throughout the year, LWVMA’s all-volunteer Legislative Action Committee (LAC) closely followed developments on Beacon Hill and advocated for our priorities. Thanks to their efforts and grassroots action by our members, LWVMA scored several big legislative wins, including an historic pay equity act, a strengthened public records law, criminal justice reform legislation, and an energy diversity bill that increases the state’s reliance on renewable energy sources, which all passed with active League support.

Day on the Hill, LWVMA’s annual lobby day, drew dozens of League members from across the Commonwealth to the State House to receive updates from LWVMA’s legislative specialists and to visit their legislators to urge support for LWVMA-supported bills. Sen. William Brownsberger, Rep. Shawn Dooley, and Common Cause MA Executive Director Pam Wilmot also addressed participants as part of a panel with the theme, “Why This? Why Now?

What Finally Moves Legislation.” The three panelists discussed the factors that affected the timing of legislative activity in recent sessions and provided tips about how best to advocate, stressing the importance of personal outreach to legislators by constituents.

In keeping with a vote of our membership at our 2015 Convention, LWVMA undertook a study of charter schools in Massachusetts in order to formulate a position from which to advocate. A study committee compiled resource materials and developed questions that were distributed to our local Leagues, who studied the materials and submitted consensus responses to the questions. Those responses will be used to develop a position on charter schools as part of the LWVMA education position, and League members will vote on that position at the 2017 Convention. If it is approved, it will provide the basis for state League action on legislation affecting charter schools going forward.

In the next session, the League will again work to pass election reform bills – including ones to implement automatic voter registration and election day registration – as well as comprehensive criminal justice reform legislation, and legislation to address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and through a transition to clean, renewable energy.
Member and Local League Activities

Each year, our members have numerous opportunities to learn, share ideas, coordinate strategy, celebrate successes, and have fun.

At two League Leader Breakfasts in the Fall of 2015, leaders representing local Leagues from Western Massachusetts to Cape Cod came together to discuss ways to strengthen the League, increase our impact, and enhance our visibility.

In April 2016, League members from across the state gathered for our biennial Council meeting at Clark University in Worcester. The agenda included workshops on climate change and our charter schools study, as well as activities to prepare for Election 2016. The keynote panel of the day, "The Massachusetts Electorate: Who's Not Participating and What Will It Take to Reach Them?" featured three experts – Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg (CIRCLE), Eva Millona (MIRA), Nathaniel Stinnett (Environmental Voters Project) – who shared research and hands-on experience identifying demographic groups that are left out of the electoral process and presented strategies for mobilizing them.
Meanwhile, throughout the year, our 43 local Leagues, located in cities and towns across the Commonwealth, encouraged active participation in government by sponsoring a wide array of events, including candidates’ nights and debates, civics bees, and educational forums on matters of public policy and local interest; publishing voting information and town meeting guides; organizing workshops on how to run for office and how to vote; registering voters at high schools, municipal events, and naturalization ceremonies; and making their voices heard at the State House and beyond.
Supporting Our Local Leagues

In Massachusetts, our grassroots are our 43 local Leagues. They serve 137 communities and, through their citizen education and voter service activities, make democracy work every day. To support their efforts, our **Daniel Scharfman Citizen Education Grant Program** provides them funding to carry out programs that increase citizen participation in the democratic process, study key community issues in an unbiased manner, and/or enable people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues through education and conflict management.

In FY 2015-16, the Daniel Scharfman Citizen Education Grant Program was proud to fund the following projects or programs:

- LWV Brookline: Forum on Citizen Participation in Land Use Policy Decisions
- LWV Harvard: Housing Matters Forum
- LWV Needham: Citizenship Education Project
- LWV Newton: Signage for Public Events and Forums
- LWV Plymouth Area: Civics Bee
- LWV Sudbury: Educational Forum: Marijuana in Massachusetts
- LWV Waltham: Civic Education Programs for the Ugandan and Other Immigrant Communities
- LWV Wellesley: Public Panel Discussion: Town Government--Why Change
- LWV Winchester: Public Program on the Incarceration of Women and its Impact
- LWV Arlington: Candidates’ Night
- LWV Cape Cod Area: Forum on the Ballot Initiative on Marijuana
- Concord-Carlisle: Public Forum on Selecting New Superintendent
- Hamilton-Wenham: Voter Registration and Education Table Banner
- Harvard: Forum on Housing Matters, Part 2
- Greater Haverhill: Naturalization Ceremony Supplies
- Marblehead: Town Meeting Guide
- Shrewsbury: VOTE TUESDAY Signs
- Waltham: Community-Wide Conversation on Islam
- Westford: ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY Banner
- Cape Ann: Vote Yes/No on Question 1, 2, 3, 4
- Springfield Unit of the Northampton Area: “Candi-dating” Event for Sheriff Election
- Norwood: Financing the School Budget Forum
- Westford: Guide to Town Meeting Booklet
- Hamilton-Wenham: Civics Bee
- Needham: NeedhamVOTES 2016
- Springfield Unit of the Northampton Area: Visibility campaign for Vote411.org
- Wellesley: VOTE Signs

*Students participating in the Hamilton-Wenham Civics Bee in Spring 2016*
The Bottom Line: Our Year in Numbers

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS
AND LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS LOTTE E. SCHARFMAN MEMORIAL FUND
COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT, REVENUES, RECLASSIFICATIONS:</th>
<th>UNRESTRICTED</th>
<th>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>TOTAL ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gifts, Grants and Contributions</td>
<td>$140,218</td>
<td>$21,370</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$161,588</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership Dues and Assessments</td>
<td>50,892</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50,892</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Fees</td>
<td>4,255</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4,255</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in Value of Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trust</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(22,545)</td>
<td>(22,545)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment Return</td>
<td>31,500</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>31,705</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>476</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Assets Released from Restriction</td>
<td>18,569</td>
<td>(18,569)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SUPPORT, REVENUES AND RECLASSIFICATIONS</td>
<td>245,910</td>
<td>3,006</td>
<td>(22,545)</td>
<td>226,371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES:                  | --           | --                     | --                     | --              |
| Program Services                      | 113,813      | --                     | --                     | 113,813         |
| Administrative                         | 69,650       | --                     | --                     | 69,650          |
| Fund Raising                          | 29,574       | --                     | --                     | 29,574          |
| TOTAL FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES              | 233,037      | --                     | --                     | 233,037         |

| CHANGE IN NET ASSETS                  | 12,873       | 3,006                  | (22,545)              | (6,666)         |
| NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR        | 309,304      | 14,793                 | 940,632               | 1,264,729       |
| NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR              | 322,177      | 17,799                 | 918,087               | 1,258,063       |

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and the League of Women Voters Lotte E. Scharfman Memorial Fund are deeply grateful for the generosity of our many supporters and our volunteers.

We wish to particularly acknowledge the support we have received this year from the Lincoln and Therese Filene Foundation, Nathalie and Theodore Jones Trust, the Donald and Nehemiah Quimby Charitable Foundation, and the Salem Five Charitable Foundation. We also appreciate the pro bono legal support we have received from Goulston & Storrs.
About Us
Since its founding in 1920, the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts has been a respected and trusted voice for citizen participation in our democracy. With 43 local Leagues throughout the state, LVWMA has been at the forefront of efforts to empower and educate Massachusetts voters and effect change on a wide range of issues, including election laws and campaign finance, natural resources and the environment, women’s health, children’s issues, state budget and finances, public education, and public safety. Membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages.

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