LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MASSACHUSETTS

2019-2020 Annual Report

Dear Friends,

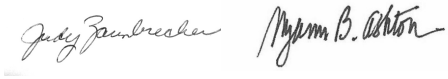
We are proud to share with you the 2019-2020 Annual Report for the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and the League of Women Voters Lotte E. Scharfman Memorial Fund, highlighting our advocacy and educational work and the impact this effort had in our communities and across Massachusetts between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020.

The 2020 Census and the federal and state elections will shape our government and the policies pursued for the next decade and more. The unprecedented challenges of the COVID pandemic and misinformation and disinformation spread through our communities required civic and good government organizations such as the League to find new ways to provide the public with accurate information on elections, voting, and the Census. The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts stepped up to this challenge by quickly adapting to conducting virtual candidate forums for Congressional, state, county, and local elections. Additionally, LWVMA initiated the work to publish an online comprehensive voters guide, VOTE411, to provide Bay Staters with accurate election and voting information. We actively participated in phone banks and social media campaigns promoting how to respond to the Census safely and securely.

LWVMA celebrated the 100th Anniversary through a series of online webinars focused on the League's history—both the successes to ensure equal rights and full civic participation for women and the failure to fight for the equal civil and voting rights for Black women. While we cannot change the past, the League is committed to learning about the League's history and to actively make the League an inclusive organization and to partner with others in the state and our communities to ensure democracy works for everyone. In 2019-20, LWVMA partnered with civic organizations that represent communities where the League does not have a presence to collaboratively support voter education outreach and to ensure our advocacy work helps address long standing inequities in state government policies.

LWVMA is strong because of our thoughtful positions, non-partisan approach, local Leagues, and over 3,000 member volunteers. During this past year, the League has learned new ways of working and started to establish new relationships for a broader impact. As we enter the new decade, the League will build on what we have learned in 2019-20 to support and protect democracy for all the residents of Massachusetts.

In League,



Judy Zaunbrecher and Mary Ann Ashton

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ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM

- **Day on the Hill** lobby day in October 2019 featured Senate President Karen Spilka, who noted, “We couldn’t do what we do here without the support and counsel of concerned citizens” such as the League of Women Voters. League members lobbied legislators on election day registration, climate action, education funding and reproductive rights bills.

- State House **Day of Action** to celebrate the League’s 100th anniversary, Feb. 6, 2020, with House Speaker Robert DeLeo; Sen. Joan Lovely, assistant majority leader; and Rep. Patricia Haddad, speaker pro tempore, with a rare joint citation from both chambers. More than 100 League members advocated for election day registration, reinforcing an earlier Election Modernization Coalition lobby day.

- Passed **pandemic election reforms** with our partners in the Election Modernization Coalition. Election laws are always a key League priority, and, until the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, we were pushing for a law permitting **election day voter registration**. Our focus shifted in the spring of 2020 to ensure safe and equitable access to the ballot box in the midst of a pandemic. The emergency law greatly expanded access to mail voting, expanded in-person early voting hours, and eased the way for election officials to process mailed ballots early and recruit election workers from a broader pool of citizens.

- Supported the **Student Opportunity Act**, bringing much-needed change to the formula used to allocate educational funds in the state.

- Supported state-wide ballot initiative on **Ranked Choice Voting**. This initiative, which would have instituted ranked choice voting for primary and general elections for state executive officials, state legislators, federal congressional representatives, and certain county offices, was defeated.

- Key partner in the **MassCounts Coalition** which worked throughout the pandemic to ensure a complete count -- with special emphasis on “hard to count communities” --in the 2020 U.S. Census. Much of this work shifted from door-to-door to phone and text banking. LWVMA hosted several phone banking sessions and made thousands of calls to encourage residents in hard-to-count communities to complete their census form.

ELECTIONS AND VOTING

- **Vote411.org:** Developed and maintained content for Massachusetts candidates and emergency, pandemic-related voting laws changes for the LWVUS online voting guide, **Vote411.org,** creating a “one-stop-shop” for Massachusetts voters. The Massachusetts information on Vote411.org was ultimately used by over **230,000 people** during the 2020 election season.

- Key collaborator with the Massachusetts Voter Table in **phone and text banking** efforts to register low-propensity voters and to turn them out to vote during the 2020 election cycle. In total, the coalition made nearly **581,000** phone calls to make sure that all communities were counted in the 2020 U.S. Census and voted in the historic 2020 election. League volunteers made **11,000** of those calls.

- **LWVMA Council** on June 13, 2020, featured keynote speaker Ricardo Ramirez, Voting Rights Advisor at the Brennan Center for Justice. Mr. Ramirez supports organizations striving for a more representative and equitable democracy across the country. His remarks to our virtual audience of 175 League members and supporters centered on safe and secure elections in the midst of a global pandemic.

- LWVMA participated with a resource table in the **Boston Election Exposition** in Roxbury in August 2019, which featured demonstrations of new voting equipment, resource tables and voter engagement efforts.

DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

- LWVMA's **annual video contest** launched 3 weeks before the Covid-19 state of emergency was declared in Massachusetts. Despite this, 25 high school students created 30-second videos responding to the question: *Should 16-year-olds have the right to vote?*

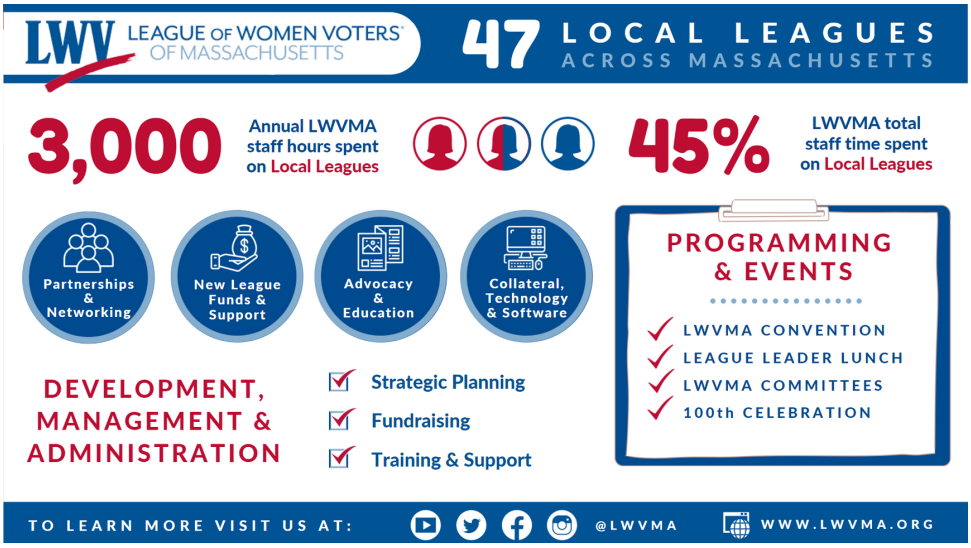
- Plans for the May, 2020, celebration of LWVMA's 100th anniversary had to be postponed, and in its place, we hosted a **100th anniversary webinar series**. We attracted a virtual audience of 500 members and supporters over the course of the series, which featured a "live" performance portraying the life of suffragist Lucy Stone; Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, who talked about her personal experiences and her recent book *The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters*; Barbara Berenson who presented *After Suffrage: The Campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment*, 1920-2020; and Nancy Thomas, Institute for Democracy and Higher Education at Tufts University, who presented *Student Voting in an Era of Covid-19*.

SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL LEAGUES

LOCAL LEAGUES

Acton Area
Amherst
Andover/North Andover
Arlington
Bedford
Belmont
Boston
Brookline
Cape Ann Area
Cape Cod Area
Central Berkshire County
Chelmsford
Concord-Carlisle
Falmouth
Framingham
Franklin County
Grafton/Shrewsbury
Greater Haverhill
Greater Lowell Area
Hamilton-Wenham
Harvard
Hingham
Lexington
Marblehead
Martha's Vineyard
Melrose
Natick
Needham
Newton
Northampton Area
Norwood
Plymouth Area
Salem
Sharon/Stoughton
South Coast
Sudbury
Topsfield Boxford Middleton
Waltham
Watertown
Wayland
Wellesley
Westford
Weston
Westwood Walpole Dedham
Williamstown
Winchester
Worcester Area

In Massachusetts, our **47 local Leagues and units form our grassroots network**; through their public education and voter engagement efforts, these Leagues make democracy work every day. To support their collective efforts, LWVMA provides training, technology and administrative support as well as funding through our Lotte E. Scharfman Citizen Education Grant program. Even in the midst of the pandemic, local Leagues found a way to devise programs to increase participation in the democratic process, study key community issues in an unbiased manner, and enable people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues through education and conflict management. LWVMA distributed $5,213.00 in grants to support these efforts.



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, 2020

SUPPORT, REVENUES, RECLASSIFICATIONS:	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	TOTAL ACTIVITIES
Gifts, Grants and Contributions	$210,186	$15,009	$225,195
Membership Dues and Assessments	61,900	--	61,900
Program Fees	330	--	330
Change in Value of Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trust	--	(10,983)	(10,983)
Investment Return	34,500	8,796	43,296
Other Income	478	--	478
Net Assets Released from Restriction	15,876	(15,876)	--
TOTAL SUPPORT, REVENUES AND RECLASSIFICATIONS	323,270	(3,054)	320,216
FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES:	--	--	--
Program Services	143,391	--	143,391
Administrative	80,878	--	80,878
Fund Raising	31,075	--	31,075
TOTAL FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES	255,344	--	255,344
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	67,926	(3,054)	64,872
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	332,598	1,070,898	1,403,496
NET ASSETS – END OF YEAR	400,524	1,067,844	1,468,368

We are grateful for the generosity of our many supporters and our volunteers. We wish to particularly acknowledge Nancy Beeuwkes, the Nathalie and Theodore Jones Trust, the Donald and Nehamah Quimby Charitable Foundation, the Lincoln and Therese Filene Foundation, and the Salem Five Charitable Foundation.

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LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MASSACHUSETTS