



your

VOTER



## President's Message

Happy Spring! Amidst Earthquakes and the Solar Eclipse, the RCLWV is BLASTING! We knew 2024 was going to be a busy year, and so far, it has not disappointed.

Let's start off by reviewing some of our accomplishments to-date:

- **Students Inside Albany (SIA) Conference:** Each year, we sponsor county high school students to participate in the Conference. This year was an especially qualified field of applicants, making our decision very tough, but ultimately, we selected our two student representatives. (See the full story on page 5.)
- **NYS League Regional Training Workshops:** Attended by Doria Hillsman, Gayle Struble, and Gail Wanger. Very informative!
- **Youth Voting Grant Projects (See stories on page 2.):**
  - High School Voter Pre-Registration at Spring Valley HS (Thank you Doria!)
  - Spring Voter Registration at RCC
  - Outreach to high schools, BOCES and apprenticeships to provide education for Get Out the Vote (GOTV)
  - Youth Corps projects (Thank you Alissa Ryan!)
- **New Citizens Grant Projects (See stories on page 4.):**
  - Naturalization Ceremonies
  - Speaking to Citizenship Classes about Voting
  - Working with Catholic Charities to reach New Citizens

As we move towards Election Day the pace and the responsibilities to register, educate and reach voters will only increase. Thank you to you all. We've been able to grow and energize our League because of your support. If you're currently participating in our activities, PLEASE continue. If you're still looking for a way to get involved, PLEASE attend a meeting, or reach out to find your niche. It will take ALL of us to get the job done.

Yours in league,

*Gayle Struble, Co-President*

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# LWV News: The latest updates from Chapter, State, and National

## Chapter Activities



### Reaching Out to the County's Students

We know that the earlier we can get people involved in the democratic process through education and voting, the more likely it is that they'll remain active throughout their lives.

With that in mind, RCLWV is currently working with Spring Valley High School to pre-register 16- and 17-year-olds and building educational programs to instill the importance of lifelong civic involvement.

We'll also be on the campuses of Rockland Community College, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Dominican this Spring meeting with students, answering questions, and doing Voter Registration drives. We conducted similar events last Fall, registering over 100 college students! We're planning to surpass that record-breaking number of new voters with our Spring events. If you'd like to help out, please email Gayle Struble at [gjstruble@gmail.com](mailto:gjstruble@gmail.com) for details or to join us.

### Grants

As you may know, RCLWV was awarded two grants for 2024, focusing on New Citizen and Youth Voter Registration. Regarding the New Citizen population, we have been attending the County's Naturalization Ceremonies, meeting new citizens, and sharing information about our organization. In addition, we've reached out to Literacy Solutions and Catholic Charities to see how we might partner on educational programming. Stay tuned for more details!

In addition to our activities around Youth Voting as noted above, RCLWV has been reaching out to other high schools, the BOCES Career and Technical Center, student governments, and the Boards of Education in the County. The goal is to get as many young people interested in getting actively involved in voting and civic activities.

### Voting While Incarcerated Update

We continue to work with the Sheriff's Office to provide those incarcerated in the County Jail with the opportunity to register and learn about their voting rights. RCLWV has created a very informative training video to help educate County Jail personnel so they can better assist inmates throughout the process. For more details, contact Gayle Struble or Doria Hillsman.

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## State/National Activities

### Day of Advocacy

On May 7, 2024, the State League will host an in-person advocacy day from 9:30-4:00pm in Albany. You'll have the opportunity to:

- Learn about important legislative issues and how to advocate for them.
- Meet new league members from across the state.
- Lobby your representative at the Capitol.
- Enjoy lunch provided by LWVNYS.

League members are asked to make their own appointments with legislators and schedule them for 1:30 pm at the earliest. We will walk up to the Capitol after lunch. Those without appointments may try to visit their legislators or join the state League staff in the galleries watching session.

Click here to register:

[https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/T906XGHHNjak-uq-X7OxMw](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/T906XGHHNjak-uq-X7OxMw)



### New NYS Law to Encourage Young People to Vote

In September 2023, Governor Hochul signed a bill that establishes school voter registration and pre-registration programs. This law requires local boards of education, BOCES, charter schools, and non-public schools to adopt policies that promote student voter registration and pre-registration, including providing access to voter registration and pre-registration applications during the school year and informing students of the state requirements for voter registration.

This is perfect timing for us because the RCLWV Youth Corps is ramping up our efforts to get as many young people as possible engaged and excited to vote. For more information, to volunteer, or to join, please contact our Youth Corps Coordinator Alissa Ryan at [ryan.alissa@gmail.com](mailto:ryan.alissa@gmail.com).

### National Update: YOUR VOTE MATTERS! Here's Why:

- It determines your access to affordable health care.
- It lifts up the voices of those most impacted by climate change.
- It ensures that we're all represented in our government, not just those of us with greater wealth or systemic advantages.
- It promotes immigration reform, including family reunification and political asylum.

Visit <https://www.vote411.org/> for all the election information you need. Be sure to share with others as well. Register to vote; Check your registration; and Find out who and what's on your Ballot.

## Rockland County LWV in the Community

In addition to the Chapter's many ongoing initiatives, we're also involved in activities in the community as co-sponsors and partners. Here's some of the things we've been up to in the last few months:



- 1.** RCLWV is working with the Center for Safety and Change in New City. We're developing a voter registration packet that the Center's counselors can use to help women and families with voter age children register and vote while maintaining their safety and privacy.
- 2.** In celebration of Women's History Month in March, RCLWV partnered with the Rockland County branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) on "The Power of Women's Vote" online event.
- 3.** The RCLWV Leadership Team also is participating in ongoing collaborative meetings with the NAACP Spring Valley and Nyack branches regarding Voter Education programs being planned throughout the coming months. Look for more details in our updates!
- 4.** Chapter Leadership has been attending the monthly Naturalization Ceremonies at the Firemen's Training Center in Pomona, meeting and greeting our newest citizens and introducing them to the League of Women Voters. Our goal here is to provide education about voting, including why, and how, and where to get additional resources.
- 5.** Initial meetings are taking place with Catholic Charities to determine how RCLWV can partner to provide voting resources and education through the Catholic Charities' network.
- 6.** We'll be meeting with West Nyack-based BRIDGES this spring to share the many resources RCLWV has available. BRIDGES is an organization created to remove barriers and advance autonomy for people with disabilities, and we are in a position to provide voting education and information to their clients.

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## Meet the RCLWV 2024 Students Inside Albany (SIA) Representatives

What is the Students Inside Albany Program (May 19-22)? It's an annual conference that provides high school students across NY State a unique opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge about state government. The program's main objectives are to enhance students' understanding of their role in representative government and equip them with essential tools to fulfill that responsibility.

During the conference, participants engage in interactive lectures covering various topics, including the state budget process, the role of lobbyists in legislation, citizen rights in accessing government information, media's role in politics, and efforts to reform state government. Additionally, students get the chance to tour the state Capitol and shadow their respective Senators and Assemblymembers during legislative sessions.

Our Chapter is honored to be sponsoring two very impressive Rockland County students: [Ashley Ely](#) and [Abigail Koshy](#). They'll be sharing their Conference experiences in a future issue of this newsletter.



**Ashley Ely** is a 12<sup>th</sup> grader at North Rockland High School who lets her academic achievements, love of education, and involvement in community guide her.

Her goals include bringing about positive change and equality of opportunity within our society. To that end, she is very close to presenting for the NYS Seal of Biliteracy, has taken many college level courses while in HS, is active in the Pit Orchestra, involved in Mock Trial, is a National Honor Society member, is Treasurer of Speech and Debate Club, President of the UAccess Life Club, and is involved in the Academy of Law and Society.



**Abigail Koshy** is an 11th grader at Clarkstown High School North who is passionate about the legal field and intricacies of the law. She is captain of her school's Mock Trial and Senior Advisor for the county's Youth Court program.

In addition, she is involved in the Indian Cultural Heritage Arts Awareness Organization, is a Bharatanatyam Student Teacher, and Fundraising Chair of DECA. Her goals and activities center on promoting diversity, education, and inclusion in her school and community, leading fundraising events, and focusing on navigating various perspectives while finding common solutions.

### 2024 Membership Directory

Be on the lookout for the 2024 RCLWV Membership Directory! This useful tool provides you a listing of all active members and their contact information. This great networking document will help you learn more about the like-minded members of our local chapter. We encourage you to use it to reach out, share ideas, provide input, and volunteer. Committee and leadership information is also included, so consider this your go-to source for staying in touch with your RCLWV peers.


The Directory will be provided to everyone in digital form. Printed versions available upon request.



# Calendar of Events: Mark the Dates!

## APRIL 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	<b>15</b>	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



April 15

General Meeting, 7:00pm Via Zoom

(Link provided via email sent on April 8th)



## MAY 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	<b>7</b>	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

MAY 7th


Day of Advocacy, Albany

See details on page 3 of this newsletter.

# Calendar of Events (cont'd): Mark the Dates!

**JUNE 2024**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						



**June 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**Annual Meeting and Election**  
 Save the Date! We need your input, ideas, participation!  
 Be on the lookout for location and time details.

**June 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Naturalization Ceremony**  
 Firemen's Training Center, Pomona

**June 15 – June 23**  
**Early Voting**

**June 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**Primary Election**  
 Federal, State, and Local Offices

**June 27 – June 30**  
**LWV National Convention**  
 Hybrid (online and in-person, DC)  
 Contact Doria [Hillsman](#) or Gayle Struble for info

## ERA Amendment Update



Although NY State has an **ERA Amendment**, there will be a proposition on the November Ballot to expand the categories of protected classes, groups, and services in the current ERA Amendment. There will be a big push to educate and advocate for approval of this amendment. Watch out for the advertised education events on this very important issue.

## Your Leadership Team

**Doria Hillsman, Co-President:**

[doria.hillsman@gmail.com](mailto:doria.hillsman@gmail.com)

**Gayle Struble, Co-President:** [struble64@gmail.com](mailto:struble64@gmail.com)

**Gail Wanger, Treasurer:** [gailwanger@gmail.com](mailto:gailwanger@gmail.com)

**Alissa Ryan, Youth Corps:** [ryan.alissa@gmail.com](mailto:ryan.alissa@gmail.com)

**Susan Reif, Newsletter Editor:** [sbreif@gmail.com](mailto:sbreif@gmail.com)

**Monica Ferguson, Social Media:**

[themonicaferguson@gmail.com](mailto:themonicaferguson@gmail.com)

**To Join:** <https://lwvrocklandcounty.org/join-our-league/>

**To Donate:** <https://lwvrocklandcounty.org/donate-to-the-league/>

### **More Ways to Reach Us:**

**Email:** [rocklandlwv@gmail.com](mailto:rocklandlwv@gmail.com)

**Website:** <https://lwvrocklandcounty.org/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/LWVRockland>

## The League of Women Voters: Who We Are

We believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy. That's been our vision since 1920, when the League of Women Voters was founded by leaders of the women's suffrage movement. For 100 years, we have been a non-partisan, activist, grassroots organization that believes voters should play a critical role in democracy. The League works to protect and expand voting rights and ensure everyone is represented in our democracy. For more information, and membership information, visit:

**League of Women Voters of Rockland County:**

<https://lwvrocklandcounty.org/>

**League of Women Voters of NY:**

<https://www.lwvny.org/>

**League of Women Voters (National):**

<https://www.lwv.org/>



Please join us in welcoming the newest RCLWV Members. We look forward to their participation!

### **New Members**

*Beth Davidson, Mickie Diamond, Barbara O'Freil, Christine Knapp, Vivian Street, and Sonia Tracey*