



Engaging New League Members / Re-energizing Existing Members

Since Election Day, Leagues at all levels have seen an increase in potential volunteers and donors interested in getting involved in the League's work. Here are tips for all Leagues to keep in mind as we work to leverage this uptick in interest.

1. **LISTEN.** Ask new and potential members to talk about why they joined the League (or are interested in the League). What issues are they particularly interested in? What skills do they have? What skills would they like to learn?
Tip 1: Small group informal coffees create a "safe space" for members and non-members to more freely share. Public places (like coffee shops) work especially well for these drop-in meetings.
Tip 2: Schedule meetings so people can attend; try different times to attract different people.
2. **RESPOND quickly to potential volunteer interest.** Thank interested individuals and welcome them to your League (whether as a volunteer, a donor or a new member). Call them or meet them for a coffee. Engaging volunteers within the first 30 days is critical to retaining them.
3. **Be ready to suggest specific, concrete volunteer opportunities for new people to get involved soon.** The best activities are:
 - a. Community facing (for example, voter registration drives or advocacy action, NOT internal things like program planning).
 - b. Focused on the League's core democracy/voting rights issues: for example, informally observe one or two city council/school board meetings to gain a sense of community issues; what organizations use public input to advocate; does the board or council reflect the demographics of the community? Report back. Have discussions about what you've learned.
 - c. Tangible & bite-sized (ask for one afternoon or one hour of help.)
 - d. Provide training and/or mentoring for any activity.
4. **Continuing volunteer opportunities include:**
 - e. Voter registration – high school, community events
 - f. New citizen or other ongoing voter registration/engagement work.
 - g. Local or state advocacy campaigns on key League issues, activities such as:
 - i. Attending a state/local lobby day, participate in legislative interviews
 - ii. Sending letters/action alerts to officials about legislation
 - iii. Writing letters to the editor
 - h. Preparing for local election activities
 - i. Election follow up, such as participating in "next steps" meetings with partner groups, meeting with election officials
 - j. Find local issues where the League can be active. This may be related to national or state issues, or may be something that is unique to your community.

Remind new and existing members why it is important for us to be active at the local level

Engaging & Re-energizing

If you have more ideas for this guide, please contact Helen Hutchison – hhutchison@lwvc.org



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as well as nationally – to make our communities stronger, and to build strong leadership. We need healthy, well-educated children for the future; we need city and county governments to provide a multitude of services to all of us every day. Being active on a local level will make our communities stronger. What we do makes a difference and we need more of us because there is a lot to do.

- k. Have a list of League Committees or other structures where work is being done on an ongoing basis. They can sit in and jump in when they feel ready.
5. **Learn:** The League of Women Voters offers multiple opportunities to learn more about our communities, our government, and how to be an effective advocate. Example: The LWVC offers a wide variety of guides about how to analyze legislation and how to advocate. You can find out more about what issues the LWVC is working on at lwvc.org; look at lww.org to find about the LWVUS. Remember to sign up for action alerts from each!
6. **Make** it easy for people to make **small donations** to your League, then acknowledge the gift with a thank you and an invitation to get more involved, if desired.
7. **Be positive** and **welcoming**. Talk about the League’s victories. Welcome people to our work in ways that fit them. Have succinct language about our impact and about how others can help us to make that impact even greater. Publicize that language wherever and whenever possible.
8. **Finally:** Try not to jump right in with details about League structure and rules. Instead try to find ways to make the League work for these new members who are not as steeped in League traditions as some of us are.
9. **ASK.** Ask your social media networks, community partners, and your own members to take advantage of this unique opportunity and talk about the League as a place for people who want to make a difference. For example, a social media post could say something like (see more below):

Some Samples of “How To” Guides to Activism

These are all partisan, but can be used as **guides** to how to be active locally.

Indivisible: <https://www.indivisibleguide.com/web/> - guide to how to be an effective advocate

Wall of Us: <https://www.wall-of-us.org/> - four concrete acts of resistance delivered to your inbox each week

Women’s March: <https://www.womensmarch.com/> -- resources plus action guide

5 Calls: <https://5calls.org/> -- quick and easy things to do each day; 5 minutes, 5 calls

Sample Social Media Graphics & Messages



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If you're looking for ways to get involved in your community and help defend our democracy, join the [NAME] League of Women Voters! We have been fighting for voting rights for almost 100 years, and that work continues today. We are looking for neighbors and friends to join our work. Come to a League meeting [DATE / TIME / LOCATION].

TWITTER:

Looking to get more involved in your community? Consider joining the [NAME] League of Women Voters: [LINK TO LEAGUE WEBSITE]

Join the [NAME] League of Women Voters and help us work towards [LOCAL GOAL / TOP ISSUE]!

Volunteer with the [NAME] League of Women Voters to learn more about [LOCAL GOAL / TOP ISSUE] facing our community.

The [NAME] League of Women Voters is working to protect voting rights and social justice in [TOWN / COMMUNITY / DISTRICT]

FACEBOOK:

If you're looking for ways to be more involved in your community and help defend our democracy, join the [NAME] League of Women Voters! We fight for voting rights and social justice. We are looking for neighbors and friends to join our work on [LOCAL ISSUES TAKING PRIORITY IN YOUR LEAGUE]. Come to a League meeting [DATE / TIME / LOCATION].

The [NAME] League of Women Voters is working with local officials on [LOCAL ISSUE]. We need concerned citizens to make their voices heard and tell our politicians we want [WHAT WE WANT] for the people of [TOWN / COMMUNITY / DISTRICT].



An example of a flyer created by the LWV San Diego



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Make Democracy Work!



Join the League
of Women Voters
San Diego



Join a Committee

- Immigration and Deportation
- Natural Resources
- Public Policy
- Program
- Education
- Membership

Attend a Meeting

- Sips and Civility
- Lunch with the League
- Earth Day

Connect with Officials

- Observer Corps attends official meetings
- Legislative Committee meets with city and state legislators

Find out more about these opportunities at the League of Women Voters website, www.lwv.org

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Examples of What Local Leagues are Doing in California:

The LWC North County San Diego has regular informal “office hours” with the president at a local coffee shop.

The LWV Orange Coast holds monthly issue-based discussions. At each meeting, they have information on related legislation, along with postcards so people can send messages to their legislators.

The LWV San Diego holds monthly discussions (“Sips and Civility”), with beer and wine available. They are held at times and places that encourage young people to attend after work.