

Power the Vote, Power the League: Voter Registration and the MLD Best Practices July 2012 Guidance on Opportunities

The League is known for our great voter service work. The public has come to expect us to register voters, get out the vote, and protect voters' rights, and we deliver! This election season, we can do even more.

While powering the vote, we also can power the League to become more vibrant, strong, visible and growing! We need to strategically consider new ways to do the same voter registration work we've been doing for years. Small changes can make big differences for voters and for the League.

Use the questions and suggestions below to have an honest and thoughtful discussion of the local Leagues' voter registration activities. Allow the local League to consider what they've been doing and how they can use their voter registration outreach to build the League in membership, leadership, and visibility.

What can we do differently?

- Where and when have you registered voters in the past? How successful was your voter registration activity (i.e. how many individuals did you register)? Where and when will you register voters this year?
- Are you reaching out to underrepresented communities (such as minorities, high school or college students)?
 - Reaching out to under-served populations can maximize your volunteers' precious time, as you will most likely register more people in less time. Always go to the same library and register 2 people the whole day? Try going to a different location, such as a community college campus.
 - Are there partners who can help you reach out to these new communities? Who and how will you reach out to them?
 - Are there ways to continue to foster these relationships/partnerships beyond the election?

How are we speaking about the League?

- What language can your local League use to promote the League and your work that resonates with and is easily understood by the general public?
 - The word "nonpartisan" does not resonate with the general public. Instead, state repeatedly that the League "does not support or oppose any candidate for office."
- How can you make it obvious that the League is still around and is registering voters this year?
- How can you convey how individuals can become more engaged or involved with the League?

How can we engage others?

- What small and concrete activities can people do to assist with this (spend 2 hours at the location doing registration, recruit a few friends to help, etc.)?

- Who can you ask within the League to volunteer with voter registration?
- Who outside of the League could volunteer with voter registration (such as students, friends, and allied organization members)?
- What allied organizations can you reach out to new underserved communities?
- How will you advertise your voter registration events? What media partners can reach out to? What role does new or social media serve?
- How will you work with local election officials? What information do you need from them to ensure your program runs smoothly?

How will you follow up on your voter registration activities?

- How will you keep track of your registrations (e.g., how many)?
- Are there ways to follow up with registrants (e.g., send them a link to Vote411 or SmartVoter)?
- How will assess your plan (i.e., how well did it work? Should this be replicated in the future)?
- How will you follow up with those that volunteered to see if they are interested in volunteering for other League activities?
- How will you appreciate and/or thank the volunteers or partner organizations that helped?

Resources Available to You:

Power the Vote, Power the League. Summer Webinar Series

Encourage your local League coordinators to [register](#) to participate in the first session of our *Power the Vote, Power the League* summer webinar series! This series is ONLY open to participating MLD local Leagues. Our first session will be on Thursday, July 12, 2012 at 2PM ET (1pm CT, Noon MT, 11am PT) and will be about infusing MLD best practices into voter registration activities.

LWVUS Pass-Through Grants

LWVEF is pleased to announce a new pass-through grant opportunity to help Leagues engage community college/technical/vocational school students and new citizens in 2012. State and local Leagues are encouraged to [download](#) the project description and funding application for fall 2012 activities. Contact Maggie Duncan (mduncan@lww.org) if you have questions about completing your application. Sunday, July 15, is the application deadline.

High School Voter Registration Kit

This comprehensive training manual provides a step-by-step guide to help you develop winning high school voter registration programs and encourage young people to register and vote. The guide comes complete with field-tested tips and a range of planning, training, and outreach tools to help you succeed.

Event/Activity Planning Checklist

Use the event/activity planning checklist for your voter registration activities this year to ensure you are incorporating direct, media, and allied outreach, as well as leadership development into every activity. Don't forget to think of ways you can follow up on this great work! Available in the MLD Handbook (in Chapter 3 or the "Tools you can Use" section of the binder).

National Voter Registration Day

The League is partnering with allied organizations across the country to participate in National Voter Registration Day on September 25, 2012. Consider planning a voter registration event on this day to be part of something big!