

United Nations Event – Nov. 9

League members and friends from around the state met in NYC for the annual United Nations briefing on **Tuesday, November 9**; this year's topic was Microfinance. Speakers from the UN Capital Development Fund and the UN Development Programme provided comments and a power point presentation explaining the concept and process of microfinance and detailing many of the benefits for the individuals, as well as the communities. See the state website for the power point presentations and additional information.

Fall 2010 Debates/Voters Guides

LWVNYS partnered with the Association of Public Broadcast Stations (APBS) this year to offer candidate debates. We aggressively pursued those three major races: governor and US senate races. Basically incumbents were not interested in debates; hence we had the Hofstra debate, and nothing else for governor, and some local senatorial debates. LWVNY City, however, was very effective at convening debates broadcast locally through the ABC affiliate.

The state League used Smart Voter to provide an online candidate information service this year. Despite some difficulties getting full ballot information for the Primary election, we were able to post complete lists of candidates for the General Election in Nov., totaling 254 races and 576 candidates around the state. We also provided two paper Voter Guides; Part I provided basic registration and voting machine information while Part II included candidate information on races for Governor, Comptroller, Attorney General and the two US Senate seats. Both the paper guides and online system provided responses from candidates to questions posed by the state League.

Call for Board Nominations

Every two years, members of the LWVNYS elect their leaders for the next board term at the State Convention. **The deadline for recommendations has been extended** - send your recommendations by Dec. 15 to Janalyn Travis-Messer, Nominating Committee Chair, PO Box 919, Shelter Island, NY 11964.

Lobby Corps

The League of Women Voters of NYS is developing a Lobby Corps, similar to that of LWVUS. The purpose is to train a group of volunteers who will then communicate the League's position on proposed legislation in person directly to the members of the state Senate and Assembly. The volunteer lobbyists will receive background information, talking points and individual assignments of legislators. Come make a difference – and try something new in the League! Contact the state office if you are interested.

State Convention: May 20-22, 2011

The State Convention will be held at the Desmond Inn in Albany from May 20-22, 2011. We are once again organizing a Silent Auction which will be available online and at Convention so everyone, not just attendees, can participate. Start thinking of donations; be creative and think of some new items or services that can help raise funds for the League. Donations forms are available by calling the state office.

Program Planning

In a grassroots organization, it is vital that all members have the opportunity to participate in the program-making process. League program, the issues selected for concentrated study and action, is determined by members. This process provides every member an opportunity to influence the issues that will direct League action during the 2011-2013 years. The final program will be adopted by the delegates to the 2011 LWVNYS Convention, but ask your local Board when your program planning meeting will be held and help make the decisions.

1919 Society

Don't forget to include the state League in your will - and join the 1919 Society. If you already have included the League in your will, just let us know and we'll add you to the members of the Society. **We already have two members – and we're hoping for many more!** As a member, your name will be engraved on a plaque in the state League office, listed in the *State Voter*, and on the website.

Membership Recruitment Initiative

LWVNYS has been invited to participate in the LWVUS Membership Recruitment and Leadership Development Initiative (MRI) for 2011. The MRI is an innovative approach to strengthening the League by attracting new members and fostering new leaders. Contact the state office if you'd like to join this new initiative – we need coaches to work with local Leagues – and to identify local Leagues that may want some help in strengthening and increasing their membership.

FIX ALBANY NOW! 2011 Legislative Agenda Steps To a New and Better State Government

Redistricting Create an independent redistricting commission to draft the New York State legislative and Congressional political boundaries for the 2012 elections.

Campaign Finance Reform Support lower contribution limits and increased disclosure. In particular, support stronger and effective campaign finance enforcement with increased civil and criminal penalties for violations.

Ethics Reform Put in place a new independent ethics oversight agency and tougher enforcement. Make the legislature more open and accountable through continued rules reform.

Election Reform Improve election processes to extend, encourage and protect voting, including Election Day registration, better ballot design, improved polling place management/ poll worker training, and measures to ensure the integrity of all ballots.

Other League Positions

The League also has positions on Health Care, the Judiciary, Natural Resources, State Finances, and Social Policy including Women's Issues under which we can and do take action.