

Empowering Voters.
Protecting Democracy.

Newsletter for January 2024

REACHING LWVCM

Voicemail: 704-556-4600

E-mail:
communications@goleaguego.org

Website: www.goleaguego.org

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/LeagueOfWomenVotersOfCharlotteMecklenburg/

Twitter and Instagram: @lwvcm

League in Action: YBP438

TikTok: @user4970170161761

Newsletter Editor:
Sara Baysinger
newslettereditor@goleaguego.org

1900 Queens Road, Suite A
Charlotte, NC 28207

Vote! And Make Sure Your Vote Counts!

The League of Women Voters of North Carolina has launched a campaign to ensure citizens have all the information they need to get registered, check their registration, and get to the polls. A key message of the campaign is that voters need to bring photo ID to the polls or supply a copy of their ID when casting an absentee ballot.

Leagues across the state are being given the opportunity to request table cards (see below) for their voter registration and other events. The cards aim to provide all the resources voters need to make and execute a voting plan.

The LWVCM is hosting many Voter Registration and Engagement events around the county and beyond through the registration deadline which is February 9. Engagement is centering around providing voters with information about the new [photo ID requirements](#). Contact Voter Service Chair [Regan Aduddell](#) to sign up for volunteer training to be held on January 17.

Our VOTE411 Team led by Carolyn Lyons will now be covering Mecklenburg, Union, Gaston, Cabarrus, Iredell, and Rowan (new!) counties with our VOTE411.org* online voter guides. The team expects to publish on February 1. In addition to candidacy information, the guide will include one-stop, in-person early voting sites and hours for the March 5 elections. Voters can search for their sample ballot ahead of the election using VOTE411. The guide will also provide crucial information about new [photo ID requirements](#).

Voter Education

The LWV of Montgomery Co., IN recently published an article about how voters can guard against being manipulated by campaign rhetoric, social media, the media, and their own brains. [Read about cognitive biases](#) – errors in rational thinking that affect our decisions.

VOTE!
AND
MAKE
SURE
YOUR
VOTE
COUNTS!

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

2024 North Carolina Primary

Early Voting:
Feb 15 - Mar 2

Primary:
March 5

PHOTO ID REQUIRED

NC issued Drivers License or DMV State ID
Free Voter ID issued by your county Board of Elections
US passport or passport card
For all other IDs visit NCSBE.gov

If you are unable to get an ID, you can request an exception form and vote a provisional ballot

Remember to bring your photo ID when you head to the polls!

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- Find updates for League action and activities at goleaguego.org

FOR EVERY
ELECTION!



VOTE

411

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LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
EDUCATION FUND

VOTE 411



Visit VOTE411.org to make your voting plan now!

Check your registration status
Register to vote
Request an absentee ballot

Enter your address to:
-See what's on your ballot
-Compare candidates with our nonpartisan voter guide
-Locate early voting and election day polling sites

Need help obtaining an ID?

Visit your local Board of Elections for a free Voter ID

Visit Voteriders.org/north-carolina for help obtaining a NC issued ID

For more information visit your county board of elections or the North Carolina State Board of Elections website




Coming Events

Coming Up in January, February and March

- **Jan. 1:** *New Year's Day*
- **Jan. 2, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting (Virtual)
- **Jan. 3, 10am:** Education Action Team Meeting (LWVCM Office)
- **Jan. 9:** Carrie Chapman Catt's (LWV Founder) Birthday
- **Jan. 11, 10am/6pm:** [DEI Training](#) for Board Members and Action Team Leads (LWVCM Office)
- **Jan. 13, 9:30am:** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday [Parade](#) and [Voter Registration](#) (Uptown Charlotte)
- **Jan. 15, 10:30am:** Civil Rights & Equity: Arts, Culture, & History (Gantt Center)
- **Jan. 16, 6:30pm:** [League Talk: Melissa Price Kromm](#), NC Voters for Clean Elections Director (Zoom)
- **Jan. 16, 6-8pm:** ["Part I: Improving Maternal Health for Black Women"](#) (Caldwell Presbyterian/FB)
- **Jan. 17, 7pm:** [Voter Registration Training](#) (Virtual)
- **Jan. 18, 10am:** [Inaugural SAGES Event](#): Coffee and Fellowship (LWVCM Office)
- **Jan. 18, TBA:** "I Am Leandro" Awareness and Advocacy Campaign Launch (Virtual)
- **Jan. 19:** Absentee ballots begin to be sent by BoE to eligible voters who requested them.
- **Jan. 22:** *51st Anniversary of Roe v. Wade decision*
- **Jan. 23, 7pm:** ["NC State & Local Tax Policy"](#) w NC Budget & Tax Center Exec Director (Virtual)
- **Jan. 24, 6pm:** ["Racist Roots: Origins of NC's Death Penalty"](#) film (University City Regional Library)
- **Jan. 25, 3-4pm:** [LWVUS Webinar: Where Are Reproductive Rights Post-Dobbs?](#) (Virtual)
- **Jan. 26-27:** [LWVNC Power the South](#) (Greensboro)
- **Jan. 27:** *International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust*
- **Jan. 30, 7pm:** [LWVCM Book Club Meeting](#) to discuss *The Sum of Us* by **Heather McGhee** (Zoom)
- **Jan. 30, 6-8pm:** ["Part II: Improving Maternal Health for Black Women"](#) (Caldwell Presbyterian/FB)
- **Feb. 6, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting (LWVCM Office)
- **Feb. 7, 10am:** Education Action Team Meeting (LWVCM Office)
- **Feb. 8, 10am/6pm:** [DEI Training](#) for Board Members and Action Team Leads (LWVCM Office)
- **Feb. 9, 5pm:** Voter registration deadline (Voters may still same day register during early voting.)
- **Feb. 15:** In-person early voting begins.
- **Feb. 21, 6-8:30pm:** [2024 Civics 101 Winter Program](#) for 6 consecutive Wednesdays (Hybrid)
- **Feb. 27, 5pm:** Absentee ballot request deadline
- **Mar. 2, 3pm:** In-person early voting ends
- **Mar. 5:** **Primary Election Day**
- **Mar. 5, 7:30pm:** Absentee ballot return deadline
- **Mar. 6, 10am:** Education Action Team Meeting (LWVCM Office)

ANNOUNCEMENT:

The Board is seeking an Events Coordinator to help facilitate chapter-wide speaker series, events to engage new members, the annual holiday party, and generate new ideas! Contact membership@goleaguego.org

League Action & Happenings

LWVCM Welcomes North Carolina For the People Director Melissa Price Kromm

On January 16, the League is pleased to again welcome Director [Melissa Price Kromm](#) to speak about the new voting laws [Senate Bill 747](#) and [Senate Bill 749](#) and what they mean for voting rights. Director Kromm will also discuss the current litigation around these bills and what we might expect this cycle on voter suppression and election sabotage. League members may be familiar with her as in addition to her involvement in [North Carolina For the People](#) and North Carolina Voters for Clean Elections, Kromm serves as our statewide lobbyist and addressed LWNVC State Convention delegates in Charlotte in May 2023.



Melissa Price Kromm

Director Kromm will address the League at 7 PM on Tuesday, January 16. Members interested in hearing her talk and participating in a Q&A may sign up for the [“New Voting Laws in NC” event here](#).

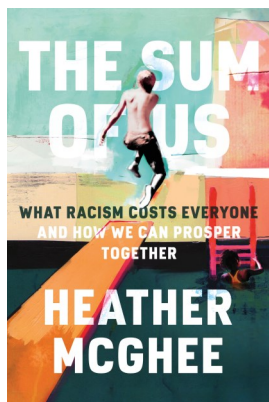
Hear Director Kromm speak about her push to mandate polling sites on all college campuses with more than 4,500 students [here](#).

January Book Club to Feature *The Sum of Us*

On January 30, the League LWVCM Book Club will discuss *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* by Heather McGhee. [Register here](#). Read the [Goodreads review here](#).

Last month, the LWVCM Book Club discussed *The Secret History of Home Economics* by Danielle Dreilinger. For those who missed it, here is a video of an [interview of the author](#).

Members and nonmembers are welcome to join our Zoom meetings the last Tuesday of every other month. Read about previous book selections on the [LWVCM Book Club Page](#). The Book Club receives a 20% discount off current book titles at Park Road Books (4139 Park Rd. Charlotte, NC 28209).



COP28 Progress and Disappointment

Last month, Dubai hosted the largest ever UN Climate Summit (COP28). The first evaluation of the [Global Stocktake](#), a five-year assessment of progress toward 2015 Paris Agreement goals to reduce impacts of human-induced Climate Change was completed. COP28 agreement includes text calling for countries to [“transition away from fossil fuels.”](#) Hard-fought, and considered a win, weak language and worrisome fossil fuel industry loopholes draw [criticism](#).

Implementation of a climate disaster [Loss and Damage Fund](#) was groundbreaking news, providing financial assistance to vulnerable nations. Developed nations (especially [China and United States](#), the world’s worst contributors of CO₂) have been criticized over the amount they are willing to pledge. National Climate Plans were judged insufficient to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 o C.



Targets must be updated for 2030 (the expected peak of global emissions). New action plans to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts ([Nationally Determined Contributions](#), NDCs) must be more ambitious in multiple sectors.

This year, developed countries are expected to meet the \$100 billion goal promised annually (in 2015) to undeveloped countries, for mitigation and adaptations to climate change, but [experts maintain](#) that trillions will be needed.

Major questions remain on international [carbon trading](#). Countries emitting carbon currently trade for carbon credits generated by atmospheric reduction of Greenhouse gases.

The relationship of climate and food systems was adopted as vital to the Global Stocktake. 159 nations committed to incorporate food and [food systems](#) into their next round of NDCs. Major emitters and global players including China, Brazil, the EU, and the US signed the agreement.

155 nations are committed to the [Global Methane Pledge](#), a voluntary agreement to slash methane emissions (considered one of the easiest ways to reduce the short-term rate of global warming) by 30% by 2030. The US announced [new regulations](#) on methane for the oil and gas industry, and China will include methane in its next NDC.

Final text added the Glasgow COP26 declaration for halting and reversing [deforestation](#) and forest degradation by 2030.” The Global Stocktake notes the importance of “ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems,” including the ocean, mountains, and the cryosphere, and many countries pledged to restore ecosystems, mangroves, rivers, and wetlands.

[Cities](#), which produce 70% of the world’s CO₂ emissions, played a vital role in the talks. NDCs must now include enhanced cooperation between local and national governments on planning, financing, and implementation. 71 countries signed on to work with local leaders, empower communities, and recognize the central role of multilevel action. -M. Fritze

League Action & Happenings

LWVCM Joins RAP for Healthcare Justice Event

The Reimagining America Project (RAP)—supported by [Health Care Justice NC](#), Coalition for Truth and Reconciliation and the LWVCM—will host a two-part series on “Improving Maternal Health for Black Women.” Sessions will be held in person at Caldwell Presbyterian Church (Hope Hall) on January 16 and 30 from 6PM to 8PM.

Session 1:

“[Transforming the Maternal Continuum of Care](#)” will be a forum on current efforts to resolve disparities in the care of Black women across pregnancy and postpartum care.

Session 2: “[Public Policy, Legislation, and Advocacy](#)” will cover the disparate Black maternal health outcomes problem.

Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners

The BOCC ended 2023 reviewing results of its Resident Budget Priority Survey. Once again, respondents rated the most important issue to be affordable housing. Overdevelopment/infrastructure and crime were tied for second, and education/schools came in a distant fourth.

County commissioners developed the annual survey to gauge residents’ perceptions, attitudes and awareness about county responsibilities. They will take the results into account as they develop their 2024-25 budget priorities.

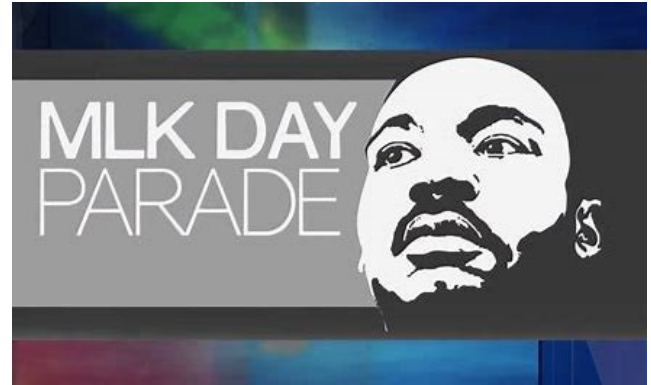
Last year, the board committed \$81.8M of its total \$2.3B budget to its five priority items (outside of regular expenditures such as the CMS request): affordable housing (\$13.8M), educational attainment gaps (\$7.5M), environmental leadership (\$54.2M), Meck Pre-K (\$544,000), and workforce development (\$1.6M). \$4.1M was allocated to combat racial disparities in all county investments.

Budget work begins in earnest for the board with the first public hearing scheduled on Jan. 23 at the Government Center. The Education Team will be there doing what Commissioner Vilma Leake has previously noted: “The League is always asking for more money.”

The Commissioners’ retreat will be Jan. 24-26. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Supt. Hill will present the CMS request May 8, the manager will recommend a budget May 16, a final public hearing will be held May 23 and commissioners will cast straw votes on the budget May 30. Budget adoption is scheduled for June 4. —Lucille Howard

Leaguers to Join Area Events Celebrating MLK

This MLK weekend, League members will take part in several area events. On Saturday, January 13, join fellow Leaguers to march alongside more than 80 organizations during the City of Charlotte MLK Day Parade in celebration of Dr. King’s life and legacy. The parade will step off at 9:30AM from North Tryon (at Ninth Street), and proceed one mile until Brooklyn Village Avenue ([parade route map](#)). This year’s event marks the return of a full parade with marching bands, drum corps, dance



teams, floats and, of course, spectators. Parade organizers anticipate approximately 3000 attendees. Contact Sara Baysinger at: communications@goleaguego.org for more information and to participate with the League. During the parade, the Voter Service team will walk the crowd, clipboards in hand, to register and engage with voters. If you’d like to support the effort, contact Regan Aduddell, Voter Service Lead at: aduddell@lwvnc.org.

On Sunday, January 15 from 10AM to 3PM, the LWVCM will host a voter registration table during the [MLK Day events organized by the Levine Museum of the New South](#). The museum has organized children’s activities all day at their facility. Two other events—a panel discussion called “Civil Rights & Equity: Arts, Culture & History” from 10:30 AM to 12 PM and dance performances from 2:30 to 3:30 PM—will all take place at the Harvey B. Gantt Center. Contact Regan Aduddell to volunteer.

SAGES Inaugural Event to Take Place January 18

Are you 60+? Welcome! You are automatically a member of LWVCM SAGES.

The inaugural SAGES event will be a coffee on January 18 at 10am at the LWVCM Office, 1900 Queens Road, Suite A, Charlotte. There will be plenty of coffee, fellowship, snacks and parking. Catch up with new and old friends to kick off the New Year. Don’t miss this event where you can give input into future SAGES events in 2024! [Register for this SAGES event here](#).

Questions? Contact the LWVCM Membership Team via email: membership@goleaguego.org



“A Look Back on Gains Made in 2023”

As the League bids farewell to 2023 and journeys into 2024, it is inspiring to reflect back on some major successes made by our national organization through chapters across our country:

- More than a million voters were reached through League in Action (text and friend banking).
- An estimated 100,000 voters were registered in US Leagues on National Registration Day 2023.
- In the first half of 2023, LWV Leagues registered more than 19,000 voters through our Young and First Time Voter Registration Project.
- VOTE411.org (our one-stop-shop for nonpartisan election information) was accessed by more than 2 million voters and provided election information for more than 20,000 local races and 46,000 candidates. These figures exceeded any previous non-federal election cycle.
- Litigation victories were accomplished in the areas of voter registration, municipal engagement and education.
- League members and supporters lobbied legislators by sending approximately 5.1 million letters.
- LWV chapters—in partnership with allied organizations, the media and citizens—demanded passage of

Voting Rights laws, the addition of the ERA to the Constitution, and restoration of reproductive rights.

These and many other accomplishments towards empowering the vote and defending democracy were made possible by the support of our members and donors. Many thanks!

LWVUS is sponsoring a program to convene League members throughout the Southern States to provide training and actions toward making our democracy more inclusive, equitable and participatory. Linda Traum, our First Vice President, and I are excited to represent our chapter at the **Power the South** meeting in Greensboro, North Carolina on January 26-27. Members Regan Aduddell and Sara Baysinger will also attend as LWVNC Board members.

The terms of many of our current board members will expire in June and our Nominating Committee is seeking people to fill these vacancies. Serving on the Board offers an opportunity to engage with a dedicated and talented group of leaders all working to fulfill the League's core mission to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy. Board members have described the experience as one to remember: demanding, rewarding, challenging and satisfying!

As a member of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Board, you will be able to:

- *Help set the direction for the LWVCM
- *Put your unique skills to good use
- *Build your leadership skills
- *Collaborate with other passionate doers
- *Make a difference in the League and community

If this sounds like an opportunity you or someone you know may want to pursue, please contact the LWVCM Nominating Committee Chair, Linda Levy, at levyollie@aol.com.

Finally, as we prepare for a very busy 2024, replete with new hopes, resolutions, and spirits, please accept my warmest wishes for a promising and fulfilling year ahead for our League which will celebrate its 104th birthday in February. Let's make this year the best yet!

**President, League of Women Voters
of Charlotte Mecklenburg**

League News

Welcome to New League Members

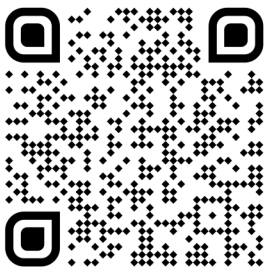
New Members in December

Elayne De Maria (Rejoined!)
Lucy Kempton

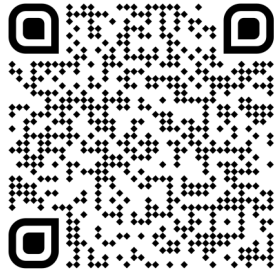
League In Action (LIA) Is Here

LIA relational organizing tool is being used by our League to spread our message and provide opportunities large and small for getting involved and supporting the League's mission. The free app can be downloaded wherever people get their apps and there is no need to be a League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg member to download and follow us on League In Action. Join our local and national league circles. Encourage your networks to join today! [League In Action Demos](#) are held every Friday at 4pm.

Join LWVUS and LWVCM League in Action today!



LIA for Apple



LIA for Google

Environment & Sustainability Team Update

Please join us to explore what we can do as a team and as individuals about the critical issue of Climate Change. If interested, contact mhowesoper2014@gmail.com

The LWVCM Seeks Future Leaders

Interested in serving on the LWVCM Board of Directors? The nominating committee seeks to identify future League leaders to be elected at the Annual Meeting in June. Members of the League's board are committed to promoting its mission of empowering voters and defending democracy by participating in board governance, planning and decision-making. **The League is a great place to get involved and make a difference in your community.** If you'd like to work together with other dedicated volunteers to further the growth and development of our League or know someone who fits this description, please contact [Linda Levy](#), 2024 LWVCM Nominating Committee Chair.

Member Spotlight: Education Team

Four Leaguers performed a significant public service for the Charlotte community when they mobilized the League of Women Voters Education Team to help get the largest-ever school bond package passed for Mecklenburg County.

League members **Laura Cooper, Carol Gray-Adler, Sara Baysinger and Louise Woods** showed up routinely at school board meetings to examine and comment about school projects being put on the bond list, looking for diversity, inclusion and equity. Then they jumped into participating on the county-wide bond committee to suggest strategy and recruit numerous others to promote the bonds at the polls. Filling a void for promotional materials, they produced massive amounts.

In the end, Mecklenburg County voters approved the largest bond issue ever, for \$2.5 B, which will renovate and replace some 30 schools in every section of the county.

Jeanne Smith and Linda Traum, co-chairs of the LWVCM Education Team, also had a hand in leadership of the massive League effort to get the school bonds directed to the right schools and eventually passed.

More than a year ago, the four started attending school board meetings and planning sessions when the bond package was being developed. Numerous meetings held by the CMS staff and two hosted by the League provided information to the public as the schools determined which schools should get priority. Before the election, CMS forums to explain the plans to parents and staff held at schools slated to receive funds each had a League representative who could promote a "yes" vote since the school representatives could not. When early voting started, waves of League members stood at the polls passing out information to voters. Most of the heaviest voting polls were covered by League members supporting the bonds on election day.

The vote was 75,369 to 44,141, a breathtaking victory with 63% in favor.

Not her first rodeo when it comes to working on education issues, **Louise Woods** has been a member of the Education Team since she first joined the League in the 1980s. She served as chair before she ran for CMS Board of Education in 1990. She was elected to the board in 1995 and served for 10 years through bond votes, pupil reassignment, superintendent selection etc. During that time, she also was on the NC School Boards Association Board of Directors. After leaving the board, she was selected for the Committee of 25, CMS's first Equity Committee, which had long been promoted by the League. Currently, Louise is on the Mixed Income Housing Coalition Executive Board (a charter member), Chair of the Church and Society Committee at Central United Methodist Church, where she was instrumental in the creation of the Children of the World Learning Center, and co-chair of Eastland Area Strategies Team (EAST). Louise earned her BA in religion at Duke University and her MSW at UNC. She worked for DSS Family and Children's Service as the first Social Worker for Teen-Age Parents' Service (TAPS). *(continues pg. 7)*

League Action & Happenings

(continued from pg. 6)

Louise and husband Dick are parents of two children and four grandchildren.

Carol Gray-Adler, a native of Laurel, MD, got involved in education issues when she retired from her position at Belk and began volunteering for one of Belk's charities, Classroom Central. Told about the Augustine Literacy Project, which she saw in action while tutoring at Montclair Elementary School, Carol went through the extensive tutoring training and committed to providing 60 sessions of pro bono literacy tutoring to an under-resourced student. After receiving a BS in Marketing from the University of Maryland, Carol began a career in retail and lived 25 years in St. Louis. Her company, Famous Bar, eventually merged with Macy's, and Carol became a regional director travelling around several states. In 2010, Belk recruited her for a position in its Planning Department as a analytical merchandise manager and vice president over women's apparel, bringing her to Charlotte. She and her husband Jim, also a League member, have a son and daughter.

Laura Cooper has worked as a teacher, school administrator, and district leader in urban and suburban districts in Arizona, Massachusetts, and Illinois. She helped create MSAN, a network of 27 multiracial districts working together with researchers to eliminate achievement gaps that persist in schools, now headquartered at the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research. She served on the Leadership Team of the Strategic Education Research Partnership Institute (SERP) that brings together researchers and practitioners to address the real problems of practice. More recently, Laura has served as a consultant to public, charter, and turnaround schools, teaching teachers and schools leaders in public and charter schools how to transform schools by providing a coherent focus on improving teaching and learning. Laura has presented at numerous national education conferences and has written for several education publications. Her work focuses on addressing inequities in student achievement by strengthening teachers' and administrators' capacity to ensure that all students are successful in school. Since moving to Charlotte, she has been teaching in the Brandeis University Teacher Leadership Program and supports financing and community support for CMS. Laura and her husband Gary, also a League member, have two children.

Sara Baysinger (profiled in a previous issue) is a member of the LWVNC and LWVCM boards.

The four determined women, along with numerous other members of the team, contributed hundreds of volunteer service hours attending meetings, representing the League at events and supporting the bonds at the polls— with a happy result for children.

—Lucille Howard

2024 Civics 101 Program Registration Is Open!

Civics 101 starts Wednesday, February 21 for six successive weeks. Topics include: Board of Elections, Mecklenburg County Government, City of Charlotte, CMS Board of Education, NC Courts and a Media Panel. A terrific team of volunteers will make this year's Program a success! Three people who completed Civics 101 in the past two years are on the team based on the impact of their experience. (See testimonial from Chris Winston.) Lots of new ideas will make this Program better than ever. Members are encouraged to consider attending and inviting friends and family as well. There is no charge to participants who may choose between attending in person or virtually via Zoom. Financial gifts are welcome! The League is dedicated to continuing to offer the program to the public at no cost.

Participant Testimonial

"I have lived in several cities and states in the US, and Canada, and government is different everywhere. **Through Civics 101, I gained a better understanding of how things work in Charlotte, and much more than I had expected.** The three things I remember most were (1) the office of the Ombudsman (the office that helps you navigate government), (2) the budget game we played (where we acted as public officials and apportioned available dollars across a much higher demand for those dollars), and (3) the fact that many of the actual officials showed up for each meeting. **The fact that the course is now online made it possible for me to actually complete it this time, after two previous tries that were only in-person.**"



—Chris Winston, LWVCM Member and VP of Strategic Alliances, Projotech, Inc.

Call for Members for LWVNC Action Teams

LWVCM Members are encouraged to consider learning about and potentially joining any of the following statewide action teams: **Direct Election of the President; Citizen's Initiative; Tax Policy; and Education.**

Contact Sara Baysinger at baysinger@lwvnc.org for more information about these teams and opportunities.



Clockwise from top left: Members at Creative Mornings with Matt Olin and Tim Miner; Ed Team members at outgoing CMS Chair Dashew and Board Member De La Jara farewell; members at Dec. 12 CMS Board Meeting with Public School Strong members.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

1900 Queens Road, Suite A
Charlotte, NC 28207

Dated Material

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