



# NEWS RELEASE

November 22, 2021 • For Immediate Release

Contact: Eileen VanWie, League Co-President, [vanwieek@yahoo.com](mailto:vanwieek@yahoo.com) or Kathy Brook, League Co-President, [kathybrook@comcast.net](mailto:kathybrook@comcast.net)

## NOMINATIONS ENCOURAGED FOR 2022 DEMOCRACY AWARD

LAS CRUCES---Do you know someone who has contributed to strengthening our representative democracy? If so, nominate them for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Making Democracy Work Award (MDWA) from the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico (LWVSNM). The winner will be recognized by the local League and will receive a \$250. cash prize. Nominations are being accepted through January 27, 2022, said Eileen VanWie, LWVSNM co-president. A small group of individuals may also be nominated and will share the prize if selected.

“Protecting and strengthening our democracy is more critical than ever before,” VanWie said.

“There are many people who have been involved with projects that have focused on ‘making Democracy work’ and our organization wants to recognize their efforts.”

League Co-President Kathy Brook said the nomination form asks for a description of how someone has been civically engaged, including the promotion of JEDI principles — justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Civic engagement could mean involvement or promotion of civics education, service on public committees, work on voter registration, or submission of communications to a wide audience (such as letters-to-the-editor or social media posts) that promote American democratic principles.

“One aim of civic engagement is to address public concerns,” Brook said. “People who are engaged — one effort at a time - and those who work toward improving community concerns, are the leaders making the entire democratic process better for all. This includes addressing concerns of equity.”

The nominee must be a resident of Southern New Mexico. The award nomination form, located on the League’s website ([www.lwvsnm.org](http://www.lwvsnm.org)), can be downloaded, filled out and sent to the League by any

person who also resides in Southern New Mexico. Forms should be sent via email to [lwvsnm@gmail.com](mailto:lwvsnm@gmail.com) or in the mail to LWVSNM, P.O. Box 15142, Las Cruces, NM 88004. Current members of the League are not eligible for the award.

League officials said the 2022 winner(s) will be selected by the Board of Directors based on weighted criterion available for review on the League website. The selection will be made by February 14, the anniversary date of the creation of the League of Women Voters in 1920.

The first-year winners in 2021 were Jamie Patterson and Josie Miller, academic content specialists from the Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS), and Jamey Rickman, community engagement manager for the City of Las Cruces. The three were instrumental in the success of the project “Know Your Local Government” which involved area high school students in research, tours, discussions and presentations about government, policy and civic engagement. VanWie said for the capstone part of the project, LCPS transported students from six high schools to City Hall to meet with department representatives to learn about real city problems and to help create solutions.

The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) began the “Making Democracy Work” campaign in the late 1990s, to maintain the strength of our representative democracy in the hands of the people at every level of government. It focused on five key indicators of a healthy democracy: voter participation, campaign finance reform, diversity of representation, civic education and knowledge, and civic participation. Recently, the LWVUS has advocated for comprehensive democracy reform.

For more information about the LWVSNM, see <https://www.lwvsnm.org/> or call 575-524-VOTE (8683).

#