

## NEWS RELEASE

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### CITIZENSHIP ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE SELECTED FOR DEMOCRACY AWARD

LAS CRUCES--- Mary Carter of Anthony, NM, has been selected as the 2022 recipient of the Making Democracy Work Award from the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico (LWVSNM). Carter, the executive director for the Women's Intercultural Center in Anthony, implemented a citizenship program to educate, empower and help people who have been referred to the Center for assistance. League Co-President Eileen VanWie said "the award is given to an honoree who has contributed to strengthening our democracy."



*Mary Carter*

For 13 years, Carter has taught classes at the Center for older Spanish-speaking adults who have lived in the U.S. for 15 or more years and wanted to prepare for the citizenship exam and interview to become naturalized U.S. citizens. The citizen preparation class expanded when Carter translated the curriculum into English for young English-speaking adults who have been in the U.S. for at least five years and wanted the same opportunity.

"I believe it is of great importance to educate our population on how democracy works and the responsibility and privilege it is to vote which is the reason that I personally teach the class," Carter said. "I am honored and humbled to receive this, and I hope the news of this award encourages more people to become naturalized citizens, unleash their voice by voting and are encouraged to run for public office."

Carter will be honored with a \$250 cash award during the LWVSNM general meeting on **Saturday, February 12**, two days prior to the 102<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the creation of the League of Women Voters on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, 1920, said League Co-President Kathy Brook.

“This award honors someone who is civically engaged, and someone who also promotes what the League supports — justice, equity, diversity and inclusion,” Brook said. “Mary Carter’s volunteer work promotes these democratic principles.”

“At the Center, we focus on empowering women to become the authors of their own lives,” Carter added. “Women move from surviving to thriving through our classes, workshops and through individual sessions addressing barriers and challenges in their lives or setting a plan for their personal goals. It is then that they are able to increase opportunities for themselves, their children and eventually become more involved in the betterment of their respective communities.”

This is the second year the Making Democracy Work Award was given by the Las Cruces-based League. Any non-League member residing in Southern New Mexico was eligible to be nominated.

More information about the League is available by emailing [lwvsnm@gmail.com](mailto:lwvsnm@gmail.com) or online at [www.lwvsnm.org](http://www.lwvsnm.org).

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