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Hello, my name is Susan Griggs, and I am the Co-chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of the League of Women Voters of Kitsap County. I appreciate very much the presentation that Susan Hales made about what is going on in Spokane. The Spokane League recognizes that the key to doing outreach to diverse communities is developing relationships with individuals within those communities, which is consistent with what the Kitsap League has discovered.

In Kitsap, the League recognized in 2015 that there was a need to make the League more diverse and inclusive. Between 2015 and 2017, the board held many discussions and decided that one way to encourage diverse individuals to join the League was to eliminate the cost barrier for joining. The board voted to eliminate membership dues for students and to have scholarships available to assist with the cost of member dues.

The board also decided in spring of 2017 to establish a committee that would focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. One of this committee's goals was to attract more members from minority communities.

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The DEI Committee founding chair decided to have committee members that were well acquainted with their communities, their demographics and their needs. Thus, two members from each of the four units were invited to join the DEI committee, and to serve as liaisons to their communities.

There were 5 stated goals of the founding committee, which were:

1. To boost consideration of marginalized groups in governmental and social services.
2. To sponsor community education programs about diversity, equity, and inclusion issues in Kitsap County.
3. To engage with organizations and individuals in minority and other underrepresented communities.
4. To strive for LWVK membership that mirrors our community.
5. To raise awareness among LWVK members about racial and cultural bias.

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The committee proposed the following activities to address these goals:

1. To study the demographics of Kitsap County in order to understand the communities better, including their racial and ethnic backgrounds.
2. To study and monitor representation and distribution of services.
3. To educate ourselves, other League members, and the public about DEI issues.
4. To testify, lobby, and organize for committee goals.
5. To participate in community programs and events that promote DEI.
6. To work with the WA League in developing DEI materials. (More)

We've made good progress toward our goals. We have engaged with numerous organizations and individuals who work with underrepresented communities, such as Kitsap Immigration Assistance Center, YWCA, and others. We sponsored a community education program on immigration. Some of our units have discussed racial and cultural bias, especially during our focus on the 2020 Census. We continue to work on the stated goals, aware that significant change takes time and perseverance.

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As we became more aware of the different organizations that were representing and serving diverse communities, we started developing a directory of these agencies and organizations, both inside and outside of Kitsap County, and collecting resources of books and articles that would educate us about DEI issues.

This information was assembled into a DEI Committee Resource Directory.

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In addition to the list of Kitsap County organizations that serve diverse communities, the Resource Guide contains the list of DEI organizations outside of Kitsap County, a list of the events and programs that these organizations are doing on a regular basis, and a list of resources that inform on DEI issues, such as books, articles, TED talks, and websites.

The intent of the guide is to collect information identifying agencies, organizations, and events that our League members and working groups can use to establish relationships, connections, and then collaborate with. The focus is to collaborate with groups that have goals and objectives that align with the Kitsap League DEI group. We assembled this information from publicly available resources and welcome any corrections and additions.

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This slide shows a sample page of the Resource Guide, listing the agencies and organizations that serve diverse communities. Note that there are tabs at the bottom so that one can go from this section of DEI agencies and organizations in Kitsap County to DEI groups outside of Kitsap County, to events and activities put on regularly by these local DEI groups, to the resources of books and other written or video material.

Notice the location of this Resource Directory: www./lwv-Kitsap.org

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The next few slides illustrate some of the activities that members of our DEI committee attended. Here, we see booklets from the Human Rights Conference and the Olympic College Diversity Conference in 2018. Committee members attended these conferences and then came back and informed the rest of the committee on what they had learned. (More)

There is also a photo of the Juneteenth Freedom Festival in 2019. DEI members attended this festival, registered voters, handed out election and voting rights information, and interacted with festival goers and other community and non-profit groups celebrating "Juneteenth," which commemorates the actual ending of slavery in the U.S. on June 19, 1865, more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

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Here is another photo of the Juneteenth Freedom Festival in this slide, where League members and a U.S. Congressman Derrick Kilmer stand in front of a display table.

There is also a flyer here advertising the Martin Luther King Celebration in 2020. DEI members set up display tables at community activities, where they offered information about the League of Women Voters, voting rights, and registered voters.

Members of the DEI Committee joined the "Kitsap Complete Count" committee, and trained League members to be Census Ambassadors. Census Ambassadors gave information about the Census at various libraries for five Saturdays in February of 2020.

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DEI organized a public meeting about Immigration Today in November of 2018. The program included a panel presentation describing immigration law and recent rules changes and their impact on local immigrants and agencies. About 70 participants attended, asked questions, and were appreciative of the event.

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Our committee continues to pursue our initial goals. There are various projects picked for the us to do during 2020 and 2021 to address these goals. Our first one is to assemble this DEI Presentation that we are presenting today, and share it on the Kitsap League website for members to see.

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The second project is to organize for a Kitsap League Speak Up School in March of 2021. The national League has an initiative to engage residents in creating awareness about redistricting, its importance and the impact redistricting has on how their vote is counted. The State is addressing this initiative by developing Speak Up Schools to train the public to give effective testimony to the Redistricting Commissioners in May and June of 2021.

Our DEI committee will work with the State Speak Up School, use their curriculum and PowerPoint slides to provide these training sessions. The committee members are connecting with agencies that serve minority and underrepresented communities and asking them to collaborate on putting on this Speak Up School. We are requesting that they publicize this event and consider having one their constituents joining League members as presenters.

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The third project is to promote the use of the DEI lens by League units and committees. We are developing documents for groups to use as they plan events so that they will be inclusive and will encourage participation from varied communities. We want these programs to consider “What To Ask When Examining Your Work Through a DEI Lens.”

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The last project is to strengthen our relationships with persons from minority and underrepresented communities and promote membership in the League. We continue to attend events that are put on by minority and underrepresented communities, hand out information about the League and the benefits for persons from diverse communities to join the League, and register voters.

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Thank you for coming to this break-out group. Are there any questions? OR - Questions will be entertained at the end of all the presentations.