



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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League of Women Voters of the Morristown Area Recognizes “Friends of the League” at Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner on May 20th

The Morristown Area League of Women Voters is honored to present the Friends of the League award to: five outstanding Drew University Students; Vanessa Brown, President of the Morris County Branch of the NAACP; and the New Jersey Hills Media Group. The Friends of the League award is given to individuals or entities in the Morris County area that partner with the League in meaningful ways to educate and empower voters and defend democracy. The Annual Awards Dinner and Meeting will be held on Monday, May 20, 2024 at 6pm at the Madison Community House, 25 Cook Street, Madison, NJ.

Rashel Torres, Jennifer Ordonez, Solomone Villarreal Gomez, Maria Marquez and Anthony Quesada, students in Drew University’s Sociology Department, are being recognized for their work with the League’s nationally recognized, nonpartisan and intergenerational Energizing Young Voters program (EYV). Energizing Young Voters is a suite of lessons developed by the League of Women Voters of New Jersey and its partners designed to educate, encourage, and empower a new generation of lifelong, active voters. The students are being celebrated for translating two of the EYV modules into Spanish and delivering the lessons to students at Dover Middle School in Spanish and English. Their translated lessons are now part of the national EYV curriculum. When asked for her impressions, Pat Supplee, Director of the EYV program said, “The students from Drew University are sterling examples of why I believe our democracy will continue to create a more perfect union. Their passion and commitment to civics for all, and their willingness to put in extra time and effort to translate two learning modules in our Energizing Young Voters’ suite of learning programs into Spanish are exemplary.”

Vanessa Brown, 3rd VP, NJ State Conference of the NAACP and President, Morris County NJ Branch of the NAACP, has represented the Morris County NAACP as a longtime partner with the League of Women Voters of the Morristown Area on candidates’ debates, educational programs, and special events and rallies. In addition to actively participating in the organization and promotion of debates, Vanessa Brown has been steadfast in her support by speaking at local, county and state-wide events co-hosted by the League, including Morristown’s January 6th Vigil, the Morris County women officials’ 100 Anniversary Celebration of the Women’s Vote (during COVID), and the New Jersey RBG Legacy Rally for gender justice, racial justice and economic justice. We salute Vanessa Brown’s dedication to the NAACP’s mission to ensure the political, educational, social, environmental and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.



New Jersey Hills Media Group is being honored for its commitment to informed civic engagement through its partnership with the League of Women Voters of the Morristown Area as a co-sponsor of nonpartisan candidates' debates across northern New Jersey, covering races at all levels of government from local Boards of Education to U.S. Congress. Active throughout the debate organizing process, NJ Hills editors and reporters encouraged candidates to participate, solicited and screened questions for the candidates, and publicized the debates along with other League programs and voter education material. Its family of 14 local, independently owned newspapers have provided fair and thorough news coverage in Morris, Somerset, Essex and Hunterdon counties for over 65 years. The group converted to nonprofit status in 2022 under its new parent company, the Corporation for New Jersey Local Media, and has continued to provide responsible local journalism, expand their coverage, serve as watchdogs on local government, and keep their readers informed on the day-to-day lives of the 50 municipalities they serve.

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