



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

# VOTER



**FREMONT, NEWARK & UNION CITY**

**NOVEMBER 2011**

## What Is a League “Study”?

Leagues at every level have positions based on study and consensus among members. The League uses these positions to advocate for public policy changes. During the consensus process, members read balanced background materials, develop other information resources, turn to experts and public officials for more input, and reach out to the community in a variety of communication techniques.

For the current national League study of the Federal role in public education, the results of the consensus meetings will result in a new draft position to be voted on by delegates to the national convention in 2012.

Many of you know what all of these League terms mean, but for those who do not, here’s a brief glossary, taken from the Pasadena Area League’s Web site.

**STUDY** - The process of gathering information for discussion by members with a view of reaching consensus and establishing positions on a subject adopted by convention or annual meeting. Studies are conducted at all levels of League.

**STUDY COMMITTEE** - A group of local League members that meets regularly to

*Continued on page 3*

Consensus Meeting on LWVUS Study

## “The Federal Role in Public Education”

Saturday, November 12

9 A.M.- 2 P.M.

Fremont Community Activities Center

3375 Country Drive, Fremont

*Box lunches available for \$9.00.*

*Please contact Alex Starr by Nov. 10 to order your lunch.*

Non-League members are welcome to attend, but only current League members may participate in the consensus discussion.

### **IN THIS ISSUE...**

November Election in Newark	Page 4
Redistricting and “Decline to Sign”	Page 6
Pull-out Consensus Section	Page 7
Silver Tsunami	Page 9
Green Jobs	Page 12

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**Our stimulating Celebration** of the 100th Anniversary of Women Winning the Right to Vote in California was jointly sponsored by AAUW, NOW, Alameda County

Library, and Patterson House. Thanks to each one for their dedication and hard work. Prior to the actual celebration, the float put together by LWV, AAUW and NOW with assistance from Patterson House, won the award for Best Civic Float in the Newark Days Parade!!

We are planning to switch gears in November by studying the issue of the Federal Role in Education. This is a national study. The questions that we are to answer and come to a consensus on are printed in this issue of the *Voter*. They are not easy. That's why we have chosen to make it an all day affair with a scrumptious lunch to act as an incentive to come.

Our Education Committee will present the needed background information. Some of them are brand new to League, so be gentle with them. Do read as much of the background material as you can. We have put shortened versions in our last three *Voters*, but if you have time to put in a little more effort, go to the LWV.org Web site and download the entire list of background material. See page 7 for more detailed instructions. It will be well worth your time.

Education is important. Should the Federal government be a help or will they just get in the way?

Miriam Keller  
*President*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011-12 Officers

President	Miriam Keller president@lwvfnuc.org
VP Administration	Sam Neeman
VP Program	Barbara Friedrich program@lwvfnuc.org
VP Voter Service	Sets Amann voterservice@lwvfnuc.org forumscib@lwvfnuc.org
Secretary	Carolyn Hedgecock
Treasurer	Peter Starr

## Directors

Membership Chair	Andrea Schacter membership@lwvfnuc.org
Voter Editor	Alex Starr votered@lwvfnuc.org
Publicity Chair	Isabelle McAndrews publicity@lwvfnuc.org
At Large	Kathy Bray
At Large	Martha Crowe
At Large	Judy Keller
Facilities	Eleanor Pickron

## Off Board

Education Cmte. Chair	Miriam Keller
Action/Cable Cmte. Chair	Kay Emanuele action@lwvfnuc.org
Webmaster/Db Administration	Peter Starr webmaster@lwvfnuc.org
Admin Team	Jean Holmes
Membership Team	Sam Neeman Kathy Steel-Sabo Lynn Locher
Nominating Cmte.	Marilyn Singer Jean Holmes Gail Blalock

# What Is a League Study?

*Continued from the first page*

carry out a current League study. The committee researches the subject, prepares the information for members, selects the material for presentation at meetings, determines how the material will be presented and serves as resource. The study committee analyzes recorders' reports and drafts consensus reports for the local board's approval. For local studies, the committee develops the consensus questions and drafts positions for local board approval.

**STUDY GUIDE** - A League publication dealing with a current study prepared by a national, state or inter-League organization committee providing information and suggestions to assist local League study committees.

**CONSENSUS** - Substantial member agreement preferably reached through group discussion. Consensus is the sense of the group rather than a majority opinion. Discussion is based on information prepared by a study committee and is guided by consensus questions.

**CONSENSUS QUESTIONS** – Specific questions prepared by a study committee to stimulate interaction, focus discussion and facilitate conclusions by the group. Questions vary in style from open-ended to multiple choice. Questions are approved by the appropriate League board.

**UPDATE** - A study of limited scope approved by convention delegates to reevaluate an existing position in light of new information, changed circumstance and/or conflicts with another position, with a view to considering a position change. An update may be proposed by any local League through the

position review process. Any new position resulting from an update must be approved by convention delegates. Local Leagues may also undertake an update of a local position.

## Board Briefs

At the Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, our Board:

- Approved a proclamation by the City of Fremont to declare 2011 as a year of celebration of the 100 Year Anniversary of California Women Winning the Right to Vote.
- Decided that we should use oral communications at our three cities' councils and school boards to publicize our 100th year celebration.
- Heard a report on our participation in the Newark Days parade.
- Approved Dec 12 for the League holiday party and LWVUS program planning.
- Heard that the LWVUS Web site has new information on the National study on privatization.
- Approved a new membership brochure.

### *The Voter*

Published 10 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City (LWVFNUC)

PO Box 3218 Fremont, CA 94539

510-794-5783

[www.lwvfnc.org](http://www.lwvfnc.org)

Editor Alex Starr

Layout: Jane Mueller

The LWVFNUC office is located at 3375 Country Drive, Fremont

## Voting by Mail Begins for the November Election

Voting by mail has started in some East Bay communities holding elections on Nov. 8. Alameda County voters will go to the polls in Newark, Emeryville, and Livermore.

In Newark, three candidates—Ray Rodriguez, Alan Nagy, and Ana Apodaca—are vying for office in the first mayoral election since 1978 in which the incumbent was not a candidate.

In addition, candidates are running for two seats on Newark City Council. Incumbent Luis Freitas is running as well as Jack Dane, Richard Bensco, Maria "Sucy" Collazo, and Mike Bucci. Newark's councilmembers are elected at-large, so the top two vote-getters win.

A \$63 million bond measure to raise funds for Newark School District facility projects and property acquisitions is also on the ballot.

Videos of the candidate and issue forums for the Newark election are available on our Web site: [www.lwvfnuc.org](http://www.lwvfnuc.org)

Find your polling place or answers to other election questions at [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org), or go to:

Alameda County Registrar of Voters:  
1225 Fallon St., G-1, Oakland  
Or [www.acgov.org/rov](http://www.acgov.org/rov)  
Or call 510-267-8683

## Centennial Celebration a Great Success

On Oct. 15, an audience of 125 celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of California Women Winning the Right to Vote with the League, AAUW, and NOW. A play written by Shirley Gilbert and directed by Ann Crosbie featured four prominent suffragists and their take on how the battle was won in California in 1911.

A fine cast, consisting of local members of the three primary sponsor groups, brought to light a campaign that used innovative techniques for its time. Supported in great part by men who believed in the cause, the women took the lead

and used both direct contact in small groups and mass media strategy in its earliest form.

Led by our own Miriam Keller, the organizing committee came through with flying colors as the room was decorated with posters and memorabilia. At the back of the room, there was a table laden with fabulous cookies. Eleanor Pickron put together a wonderful souvenir program for all to enjoy and take home.

So now, on to the next 100 years of women voters working to improve our rights and those of other women around the world!

## Save the Date—December 12—for the Holiday Party

The holidays will soon be here, and that means it's time for the annual LWVFNUC holiday potluck and program planning event. Marilyn Singer has graciously offered us her home for the evening of Mon., Dec. 12. We will begin at 6 p.m. with a potluck followed by entertainment that YOU will provide. We will end with a lively discussion regarding program for LWVUS.

Please contact Barbara Friedrich ([bfriedri@pacbell.net](mailto:bfriedri@pacbell.net)) if you would like to help in planning the potluck, contributing to or planning the entertainment, or preparing the material for the program planning.

This is always a fun evening and the more people involved the merrier.

# League Interviews Ohlone Trustee Jan Giovannini-Hill

*Jan Giovannini-Hill was elected to the Ohlone College Board of Trustees in November 2010. Marilyn Singer and Andrea Schacter interviewed Ms. Giovannini-Hill in September 2011. We thank Ms. Giovannini-Hill for sharing her time and ideas with the League.*

Jan Giovannini-Hill, the first in her family to go to college, obtained her masters degree after a long journey. She is a strong supporter of education, especially for women. She sees Ohlone as a place of strength for students who are the first in their families to attend college. She does see a need to clarify the process for students to get the right courses and to know for certain that they are qualified to receive a diploma.

Impressed with what she has seen so far, Ms. Giovannini-Hill perceives her role as a Trustee as a “Citizen Watchdog” who uses her best judgment to make sure the college complies with the Title 5 regulations and Ed Code and the college’s other primary goals.

During this time of economic downturn, Ohlone is working with displaced NUMMI workers and other out-of-work community members by providing them with retraining.

The trustees are routinely updated about Measure G bond funds and how the funds are used. The college’s needs have been prioritized

to assess the most pressing objectives, such as the mitigation of underground water damage on the grounds and buildings on the Fremont campus. She looks forward to seeing an Ohlone campus that will once again be the beautiful environment that draws students and community members to it while they receive a quality education.

Trustee Giovanni-Hill assures us that each board member prepares extensively for each board meeting. Dr. Browning provides additional assistance with administrative discussions in specific areas and with noticed workshops for all. An example of this is the recent Brown Act training to update the board’s level of understanding on open meeting requirements.

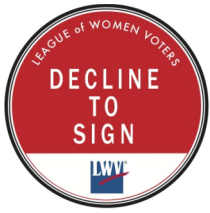
Ms. Giovanni-Hill agreed that there is a need for all committee meetings and study sessions to be accessible to the public—especially meetings at the Newark campus. She agreed that this is an issue the administration is aware of and working to resolve within budget constraints.

## Welcome to Our New Member Asha Garg

Born in Lucknow, India, Asha has three younger sisters and one brother, all of whom still live in India with their families. She holds masters degrees in English Literature and American Literature from Lucknow University.

Ahsa left India in 1967 with her husband and almost-two-year-old son and moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where her second son was born. She and her family moved from Baton Rouge to New Orleans and then to Houston before arriving in Fremont in 1983.

Asha worked in “corporate America” for almost 30 years with Exxon, then Shell Oil, and then Raychem in Menlo Park for almost 15 years. That job ended when Tyco bought Raychem. Asha has since earned certifications in Microsoft and Cisco. Currently Asha is completing her 8th year of service as a Kaiser hospice volunteer, in addition to other social work projects.



## Redistricting and Decline to Sign

The League of Women Voters urges you not to sign petitions being

circulated by groups challenging newly adopted state redistricting maps.

A group calling themselves Fairness and Accountability in Redistricting is collecting signatures to force referenda on the State Senate and Congressional maps drawn by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission.

This independent, nonpartisan commission drew new districts for Congress, the state legislature, and the Board of Equalization using fair, impartial criteria, in a process that gave maximum opportunity for public scrutiny and was out of the control of political parties and elected officials.

We urge you to join with the League and “Decline to Sign” the petitions that are currently circulating.

## Get a Jump Start on LWVC’s Study on Initiative and Referendum

Does the initiative process advance the cause of good governance in California or does it just contribute to governmental dysfunction?

These and many other questions will be part of the state study on initiative and referendum. The timeline for the study is as follows:

- Information for local League newsletter articles, programs, etc. posted Fall 2011–Spring 2012

- Study material to local Leagues in summer 2012
- Local Leagues’ consensus reports due March 2013

You can already access a wealth of background material by going to LWVC’s Members Only page. California Leagues have previously studied this issue in 1983 and 1997. Study guides for both of these years are online now.

### LWV BAY AREA

## Bay Area League Day to Focus on Regional Housing

The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area will hold its annual Bay Area League Day forum on Sat., Feb. 4, 2012, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the MetroCenter at 101 Eighth Street in Oakland. The event will focus on regional

housing, and will feature expert speakers addressing policy, financing, and equity issues related to this topic. Mark your 2012 calendar and save the date to attend this enlightening event.



Pull out this working copy of the consensus questions and use it to prepare yourself to participate in the meeting on Nov. 12. To help you formulate your opinion, visit the national League Web site at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org). Select For Members from the blue bar and then select Projects and Programs. You'll find the education study listed under Taskforces & Studies.

---

## PUBLIC EDUCATION STUDY CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

---

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

---

1. The current role of the federal government in public education is  
 Much too small    Too small    About right    Too large    Much too large
2. What should be the role of the federal government in public education? (Rank)  
\_\_\_\_ a. To ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education  
\_\_\_\_ b. To develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students so that they achieve adequate yearly progress  
\_\_\_\_ c. To mandate Common Core Standards for all students K-12  
\_\_\_\_ d. To monitor state efforts for funding  
\_\_\_\_ e. To measure teacher effectiveness through test data
3. A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy.  
 Strongly agree    Agree    No consensus    Disagree    Strongly disagree

### COMMON CORE STANDARDS

---

4. Currently the governors and state education officers have developed Common Core Standards that are national but not federal. Should the standards be mandated of the states in order to obtain federal funding? (Choose one)  
 a. Special grant programs such as Race to the Top  
 b. All programs under Elementary and Secondary Education Act where the needs qualify for funding.  
 c. All programs receiving federal funding from any source  
 d. All of the above  
 e. None of the above
5. Should there be a national assessment aligned with the common cores standards?    Yes    No  
If **Yes**, Should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated? (Choose one)  
 a. Voluntary  
 b. Mandated  
 c. Mandated if fully funded  
If **No**, what other accountability measures might you suggest? (Choose one)  
 a. Continue to allow the states to develop their own assessments.  
 b. Suggest that the local education districts use their own assessments or adopt one that is a nationally norm-referenced assessment such as the Stanford Achievement Test or Iowa Test of Basic Skills.  
 c. Suggest that districts use a portfolio type of assessment in which student projects and activities would be scored holistically
6. National standards should lead to: (choose one)  
 a. A nationally mandated curriculum to be aligned to the national standards and assessments.  
 b. A national curriculum that is only suggested but not mandated.  
 c. A suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum.  
 d. No national curriculum.
7. What role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation? (Rank order)  
\_\_\_\_ a. Provide an assessment system that is aligned to the Common Core Standards.  
\_\_\_\_ b. Provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards.  
\_\_\_\_ c. Provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers.

- \_\_\_ d. Provide information to students, parents, teachers and school districts about student achievement.  
 \_\_\_ e. Provide diagnostic information on each child.
8. Data from the national assessments are often difficult for parents, teachers, and others to understand. If we have a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community? (Choose one)
- a. Data should be “norm referenced” (where students are ranked) for district comparison only.
  - b. Data should be “criterion referenced” and clearly informative so that teachers, parents, and students know how individual students have mastered criteria established at a national level.
  - c. Data should be used to determine “cut” scores knowing if students have mastered requirements for special grade levels.
9. Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to: (Choose one)
- a. Sanction schools not measuring up to the specific levels
  - b. Reward schools that achieve high scores
  - c. Rank teachers based on student test score data
  - d. Reward teachers who have exemplary scores
  - e. Inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs

#### FUNDING AND EQUITY

---

10. In the past most of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding has been non-competitive based on need. All/Any Schools that prove they fall under the federal guidelines for funding receive those funds. However, competitive grants are now being proposed to states/districts who meet certain federal requirements, such as Race to the Top. Which would be appropriate: (Choose one)
- a. Non-competitive funding for all applicants meeting requirements
  - b. A combination of non-competitive and competitive grants
  - c. Competitive grants only
  - d. No federal funding
11. If the federal government’s role is the concern of the “common good” then: (Choose one)
- a. Mandates only should be sanctioned.
  - b. Mandates and funding should both be provided.
  - c. Funding should be provided through grants only.
  - d. A combination of funded mandates and grants should apply.
  - e. No mandates should be required and limited grants for innovation available.
12. Equity in public education means equitable access to: (Rank order)
- \_\_\_ a. High quality teaching/learning
  - \_\_\_ b. Adequate and current learning materials
  - \_\_\_ c. Clean and well maintained physical facilities
  - \_\_\_ d. Food and health care
  - \_\_\_ e. Safe and secure neighborhoods
  - \_\_\_ f. Secure housing
13. Currently Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding is considered “categorical” rather than for general use. This means that it can only be used with special populations for special purposes. ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs.
- Strongly agree    Agree    No consensus    Disagree    Strongly disagree
14. The federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children.
- Strongly agree    Agree    No consensus    Disagree    Strongly disagree
15. Federal support for early childhood education programs (e.g., Head Start, Title I, Special Education, Early Start) should include funding for parent education and support regarding child development, child health and nutrition, and access to other supportive services, such as mental health care as needed.
- a.  Strongly agree    Agree    No consensus    Disagree    Strongly disagree
- b. This funding should be extended to :
- All children    Only those with special needs    Special needs first



## Senior Mobility and the Silver Tsunami

*From the Bay Area Monitor*

*By Alec MacDonald*

Rosie the Riveter earned her retirement, and today she's trying to enjoy it. Of the thousands of women who labored in Richmond's Kaiser shipyards during World War II, a few still live in the vicinity. Their pioneering effort made them historic icons of strength and determination, but now, deep into their golden years, they could use a helping hand.

Sam Casas said he's glad to lend that hand. As paratransit coordinator for the City of Richmond, part of his job entails meeting the transportation needs of the elderly — including some Rosies, he revealed.

"They've done their patriotic duty," Casas declared.

For all the people he assists, historic icons or not, "I feel a senior who is 65 years or older has paid their dues," he said. He explained that this attitude motivates him to find ways to keep them mobile, remarking, "That's how passionate I feel about the services we provide for our folks."

Casas spoke as one of eight expert panelists at a recent educational forum entitled "Senior Mobility and the Silver Tsunami" held in the Berkeley Public Library on September 21. Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the Bay Area Education Fund and the League of Women Voters of Berkeley/Albany/Emeryville, the event addressed a mounting challenge confronting this region and the nation at large: meeting the transportation demands of a sky-rocketing elderly population.

By 2020, the number of seniors in the Bay Area will increase by 35 percent from the 2010 census as the baby boomer generation reaches retirement age. Often referred to as the "silver tsunami," this impending demographic shift may necessitate widespread adjustments across many sectors of society. A reevaluation of transportation in particular will be required,

given that aging drivers eventually face the prospect of giving up their car keys, leading to potentially devastating isolation for those who live in neighborhoods lacking alternatives to auto travel.

Citing AARP research on the subject, panelist Shannon Tracey noted that "seniors age 65 and older who no longer drive make 15 percent fewer trips to the doctor, 59 percent fewer trips to shop or eat out, and 65 percent fewer trips to visit friends and family." The field organizer for Oakland-based nonprofit TransForm went on to assert about such trips, "Those are very important pieces of continuing to have a meaningful life and also continuing to have a healthy life. And those are things that we should be paying attention to when we're looking at our transportation system."

When a group Tracey collaborates with did look at the transportation system, it found that more than 15.5 million seniors will live in communities with inadequate access by 2015. Transportation for America, a national coalition with hundreds of partners seeking transportation reform, released its findings this past summer in the report *Aging in Place, Stuck without Options*. The report ranked metropolitan areas across the country based on the percentage of seniors underserved by public transportation both now and in the years to come.

"Our national rankings show that we're in a really good spot here in the Bay Area," Tracey said, but she cautioned, "We are still looking at

significant percentages of seniors that will have poor access to public transit in the future.” Those percentages for individuals age 65 to 79? For 2015, the report forecasts 12 percent in San Francisco, 15 percent in San Jose, and 18 percent in Oakland. That’s more than 130,000 people—a large number, but one that accounts for just a sliver of the region’s square mileage.

Service providers across the Bay Area aim to keep these figures as low as possible. At the forum, representatives from several providers in the East Bay joined Richmond’s Casas to talk about strategies for advancing this goal.

Both the cities of Richmond and Berkeley offer van rides for passengers with wheelchairs, as well as taxi scrip programs. The latter allows qualified participants to pay for standard taxi fare using certificates called scrip that cab drivers can later redeem for payment. Richmond’s program sells subsidized scrip, essentially cutting fares in half, while Berkeley grants a limited amount of free scrip on a monthly basis. Berkeley’s Community Services and Administration Manager Drew King mentioned that his city connects people to the many senior centers around town via shuttles, and Casas put in that Richmond has shuttles as well, but for rental to assisted living facilities that wish to take residents on group outings.

While municipalities strive to enhance senior mobility in these ways, King commented, “I don’t believe we have the resources to meet the needs for everybody.” He emphasized a multifaceted approach that shares responsibility and considers “how we can use things like volunteer driver programs and working with other agencies and groups within the community to meet the need.”

Panelist Andy Gaines described one particular volunteer driver program sponsored by Ashby Village, a new local nonprofit situated within “a national movement” which views independent

living as “a resource that we want to cultivate.” The organization’s members receive a variety of benefits, but its executive director divulged that the most popular has been the ability to request rides from a corps of vetted volunteer drivers. Gaines added that Ashby Village has been exploring partnerships with other entities to “combine our resources so that we can more effectively serve people who are aging.”

On the topic of resources, panelist Krystle Pasco brought with her a broad listing of those available to transportation providers in Alameda County. In addition to this toolkit, the outreach coordinator for the Alameda County Transportation Commission furnished copies of various other publications she regularly distributes in her role promoting paratransit education. Pasco also took the opportunity to showcase two of her agency’s free transportation services, one for patients discharged from participating hospitals, and another for wheelchair and scooter owners whose devices malfunction.

For all the specialized services highlighted by panelists, everyone in the room understood that fixed route transit moves a much greater volume of seniors at a much cheaper cost per rider. Therefore, the responsibility for handling the silver tsunami lies predominantly with agencies like AC Transit.

“We’ve taken steps in the last couple years to get ahead of this wave,” affirmed panelist Mallory Nestor-Brush, accessibility services manager for the bus operator. “Our goal is to preserve paratransit for folks who truly need it,” she said in reference to East Bay Paratransit, the supplementary service run cooperatively by her agency and BART, but she nonetheless prioritized the larger effort to “encourage folks to use our fixed route services.”

*Continued on next page*

## Silver Tsunami

*Continued from previous page*

In order to further accommodate seniors on regular bus lines, AC Transit hopes to emphasize safety and availability of information, Nestor-Brush explained. As examples, she pointed to modifications in driver training, and to outreach targeting older riders—many of whom have never depended on bus travel before—that should better enable them to navigate the system. She also repeatedly beseeched the forum audience to attend monthly meetings of the agency’s accessibility advisory committee in order to weigh in on policy decisions.

“It’s really important that you do have your voices be heard,” she avowed.

Panelist Bonnie Nelson similarly asked attendees to get involved. The founding principal of the transportation planning firm Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates keyed in on the public’s role in procuring financial support for the various mobility options discussed at the forum. Specifically, she encouraged the audience to participate in upcoming meetings pertaining to possible augmentation of Measure B, a sales tax mechanism that in part pays for senior transportation services in Alameda County (see “Measure B Meetings” below).

“At the same time that we are seeing the senior population begin to really escalate, we are seeing revenues decline from virtually every funding source,” Nelson observed, “so I feel that funding will be the biggest challenge that we face as we’re looking at population needs increasing.”

While monetary concerns did hang heavy over the conversation, panelists assumed a positive attitude toward the future. Elizabeth Deakin, professor of city and regional planning at UC Berkeley, set this upbeat tone as she stressed the value of collaboration for overcoming economic obstacles and other difficulties. She endorsed networking and data sharing to help advocates advance best practices, and mentioned that graduate students in her department could be worthy recruits for problem solving. Deakin also compelled the League of Women Voters to stay active on this front.

As she said, “I think there’s some tremendous opportunities for all of us to work together, not just for seniors, but for the whole population to make sure that there’s good transit service for everybody.”

*To inquire about the possibility of co-sponsoring a senior mobility forum in your community, call the League of Women Voters of the Bay Area Education Fund at (510) 839-1608.*

*To learn more about facts and services discussed at the September 21 forum, consult the following online resources:*

*AC Transit - [www.actransit.org](http://www.actransit.org)*

*Alameda County Transportation Commission - [www.alamedactc.org](http://www.alamedactc.org)*

*TransForm - [www.transformca.org](http://www.transformca.org)*

*Ashby Village - [www.ashbyvillage.org](http://www.ashbyvillage.org)*

*City of Richmond Paratransit - [www.ci.richmond.ca.us](http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us) (under Department of Recreation)*

*City of Berkeley Paratransit - [www.ci.berkeley.ca.us](http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us) (under Housing & Community Services)*

# Will Green Jobs Ever Pay Off?

*From the Bay Area Monitor*

*By Alec MacDonald*

Just a few years ago, everyone seemed to be touting green jobs. Equipped with the latest in tools and training, a new wave of workers was expected to rise up and start slashing waste, pollution, and greenhouse gases while boosting energy efficiency and sparking technological innovation.

Reality has not conformed to the predictions, however. Progress has been incremental, and the full promise of a vibrant green jobs sector has yet to materialize, leading many observers to wonder if it ever will.

In an attempt to evaluate the situation, the Brookings Institution recently published a green jobs assessment entitled *Sizing the Clean Economy*. The nonprofit research organization studied business and employment data from 2003 to 2010 to gauge the nation's "clean economy" output of environmentally beneficial goods and services. Findings showed that the clean economy expanded at a slower annual rate (3.4 %) than the national economy (4.2 %), but that wind energy, solar power, and smart grid segments "added jobs at a torrid pace, albeit from small bases." Researchers also determined that, compared to the national economy, the clean economy offered low- and middle-skilled workers better pay, involved a larger share of manufacturing, and generated a higher proportion of exports.

Without pushing an excessively optimistic outlook, the Brookings Institution contended the green jobs sector still holds serious potential, especially in metropolitan population centers where industries tend to cluster. The assessment categorized San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont and San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara as two particularly key clusters located here in the Bay Area. The region as a whole has the makings of

a clean economy leader, according to Sean Randolph, president of the Bay Area Council Economic Institute, a Brookings Institution partner.

"We're better than anywhere else in the country at having angel and venture capital get behind tech, and we're quite good at getting startups up and running," he noted. But when the time comes to actually make stuff? "That's where we tend to lose ground pretty quickly." Randolph explained that young Bay Area companies have difficulty advancing past "the valley of death" — beyond the early stages of research and development to the point of generating significant manufacturing and sales numbers.

As fledgling businesses navigate their way through this critical phase, Randolph said that government can play a valuable supporting role. Through procurement policies, jurisdictions can provide commercial-scale demonstration of eco-friendly products; for instance, a city might purchase energy-saving streetlights from a local startup. Not only does such a move showcase the startup's lighting technology and provide it with a toehold in the market, but the city gets closer to meeting efficiency benchmarks as well.

Randolph suggested that government can also help companies survive the valley of death by implementing policy measures. He mentioned property tax breaks as one possibility, and while cautioning that subsidies "aren't always good," he proposed they might nonetheless be "worth a concerted focus." He added that Arizona and Oregon have boosted solar panel manufacturing through government incentives. "Right now it's

*Continued on next page*

## Green Jobs

*Continued from previous page*

very clear that the jobs are not coming to California, they're going out of state."

Or out of the country, for that matter. The Pew Charitable Trusts' 2010 edition of *Who's Winning the Clean Energy Race?* declared that "absent adoption of predictable, ambitious, long-term clean energy policies, the United States will have substantial difficulty keeping pace with China and other rapidly growing clean energy economies." The publication revealed that the U.S. dropped to third in attracting clean energy investments for 2010, representing a downward slide from the top spot just two years ago. With \$34 billion, America ranked below Germany (\$41.2 billion) and China (\$54.5 billion). Not coincidentally, the Chinese manufactured nearly half the world's solar modules and wind turbines last year.

References to this market dominance invariably entered coverage of the collapse of Solyndra, a Fremont-based solar module manufacturer, which on August 31 suspended operations and laid off some 1,100 employees. One of them, a test developer named Jim Dunphy, told *The Bay Citizen*, "Things have been difficult for a few years, because of the Chinese competition." The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported Solyndra's production cost had totaled roughly \$2 per watt, quite steep relative to the \$1.20 per watt managed by many Chinese counterparts. In bringing up the fact that it was the third American solar company that month to seek bankruptcy protection, *The New York Times* noted how the other two, Evergreen Solar and SpectraWatt, had cited China's influence as a reason for their struggles. And in a statement from the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Public Affairs, Director Dan Leistikow acknowledged the challenge that firms such as Solyndra face in going up against "Chinese manufacturers who are supported in

many cases by interest-free government financing that is much more generous than what the U.S. provides."

Not that Solyndra didn't enjoy substantial generosity. In 2009, it won \$535 million worth of loan guarantees through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The company's sensational failure represents a worrisome sign for the entire green jobs sector. In the wake of this blow, however, "we can't stop investing in game-changing technologies that are key to America's leadership in the global economy," Leistikow asserted.

Other top officials share his mindset. In response to questioning about Solyndra's shutdown at a San Francisco press conference on September 15, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson commented, "What I would hate to see is for us to walk away from the other companies who have benefited from good government policy."

She delivered these remarks from the headquarters of Method while on a visit to publicize the soap manufacturer's latest innovation: a bottle made partially out of plastic garbage pulled from the ocean. Jackson also toured a Recology recycling facility, checked out a Luminant solar installation, and met occupational trainees from the San Francisco Conservation Corps. If the message represented in this itinerary didn't come across clearly enough, she stated it plainly in a guest appearance on the local radio show "Forum" when she told host Michael Krasny that she was "really focused on making sure people understand that green jobs are what we have to be working on with everything we do."

Jackson's words sounded pressing, almost anxious, seeming to imply an understanding that without a concerted push and a little luck, the prospect of a brighter green jobs future could vanish.



# CALENDAR

Nov. 8	Newark Election Day	
Nov. 10	Education Committee	9:30 A.M. at Miriam Keller's house
Nov 12	Consensus Meeting on LWVUS study "The Federal Role in Public Education" Box lunches will be served.	9 A.M.- 2 P.M. Fremont Community Activities Center 3375 Country Drive, Fremont
Nov. 17	Action Committee	12 Noon at Kay Emanuele's house
Nov. 29	Board Meeting	6:45 P.M. at League Office 3375 Country Drive, Fremont

**Save the Dates:**

Dec. 12	Holiday Party & Program Planning	6 P.M. at Bob and Marilyn Singer's house
Feb. 4, 2012	Bay Area League Day	9 A.M.-2 P.M. at Metro Center 101 Eighth St., Oakland

ALL MEETINGS ARE FREE, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND WHEEL CHAIR ACCESSIBLE

## Mission

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

## Diversity Policy

LWVFNUC affirms its commitment to reflect the diversity of our communities in our membership and actions. We believe diverse views are important for responsible decision making and seek to work with all people and groups who reflect our community diversity.

## Join the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS today!

Any person, man or woman, who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League may join. To be a voting member, one must be at least 18 years of age and a U.S. citizen. Members under 18, or non-citizens, are welcome as non-voting Associate Members. Dues include membership in LWVFNUC, Bay Area League, and the California and National Leagues. Financial support for dues is available through our scholarship program. Contact Andrea Schacter, Membership Chair, for information.

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

New Member  Renewal  
 Transfer from \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make your check payable to:  
LWVFNUC and mail it with this  
form to:*

LWVFNUC-MEMBERSHIP  
P. O. Box 3218  
Fremont, CA 94539

Individual Membership—\$60  
 Household Membership—\$90  
Donation to LWVFNUC

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to Ed. Fund (*Make  
separate check payable to  
LWVFNUC Ed Fund*)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_