

WE Day Intro

Women's Equality Day was established in 1971 to commemorate the passage of the 19th amendment. The League of Women Voters of Appleton has held a ceremony since 2010 to honor Women's Equality Day so this is our 8th annual event. In just three years we will be celebrating the centennial of women's suffrage and I hope you will all be able to celebrate with us. We are honored to have our speaker Dr. Sylvia Carey-Butler join us today and to have all of you join us also.

Ida B. Wells once said "One had better die fighting against injustice than die like a dog or a rat in a trap."

Women have been fighting, struggling, collaborating and still have a long way to go. From Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton to Gloria Steinem and Angela Davis to Tamika Mallory and Linda Sarsour, women have worked together and apart for equality. It took almost 150 years for women in this country to earn the right to vote at a national level, and it was a struggle to include all women in that right. The League of Women Voters began because women knew that it was not enough just to vote, it was as important to be an informed and active voter at the local, state and national levels. Being an informed and active voter is as important now as it ever has been. Voter rights are at risk, refugee and immigrant rights are risk, women's rights are at risk, LGBTQ rights are at risk, Mother Earth's right to exist is at risk. Many of the issues that LWV has strong, researched-based positions on are being threatened. So we meet and we march and we challenge our elected officials and we vote and today we honor the women from our past, we motivate the women of our present and we prepare the way for the women of our future recognizing that some women continue to be marginalized and that we must work harder to include all women in our movement. Now more than ever it is not enough to just sit and watch the news in dismay. It is no longer enough to just protest. It is no longer enough to just shake our heads in disgust. We must begin to take action. We must begin to challenge our elected officials and hold them accountable for their decisions. We must challenge people to not just complain, but to also vote...in local, state and national elections! We must run for public office. We must challenge ourselves to look deep within and ask ourselves honestly if we have done enough for all women. Susan B. Anthony once said "wherever women gather together failure is impossible!" Let us all work together to prove Ms Anthony right.

Now I would like to introduce Dr. Bola Delano-Oriaran who will introduce our keynote speaker.

Thank you for attending and celebrating with us. I also want to thank the WE Day committee who did such a spectacular job making this event a great success. It is because of the women's movement and people such as yourselves that there have been positive changes for women and society - domestic abuse laws that are enforced... sometimes; that there are sexual assault laws that are enforced... sometimes; that there is more equity in pay between us and our male counterparts..sometimes; that there is any type of family leave , although not paid...yet. Angela Davis said- " you have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time." Let us continue to radically transform the world...and let us do it all the time. Thank you all for attending and thank you to our speaker.