

Patty Shepard Honored for Civic Leadership by League of Women Voters of Winchester for Her Work Inspiring Others to Build an Inclusive World for All!

For immediate release.

May 31, 2021 The League of Women Voters of Winchester is delighted to announce that Patricia “Patty” Shepard of Winchester, will be honored as the 2021 recipient of our Civic Leadership Award, at the June 12th Annual Meeting. Patty is being recognized for her longstanding work in the area of social justice.

Patty came to Boston after she received her BA in Sociology from the University of Rochester in 1973, then trained and earned a master’s in Clinical Social Work at Simmons College in 1978. She initially worked at the Mass Eye and Ear Infirmary, Office for Children, and then Beth Israel. In 1984 she was married, to her late husband Ron, her partner of 40 years. They settled in Winchester in 1985, where she raised two sons, Ian and Shane Denhart. Professionally, while raising her two sons, Patty established a private practice in body-oriented psychotherapy which she happily continued for 34 years on a part-time basis until she retired in March 2021.





In the summer of 2011, Patty became involved in social justice issues when the “Occupy” movement took hold in Boston. She participated in a similar Occupy group at her church in Winchester, cooked dozens of meals for Occupy meetings that continued through the winter in Boston and helped to organize a Community Workshop on Socially Responsible Investing and Public Banking.

For the last several years, Patty has been active in a variety of organizations including the local NAACP, the League of Women Voters of Winchester, the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and her church, the Winchester Unitarian Society (WUS). She served on the board of UU Mass Action for six years as well as the LVWMA DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) committees for three years delivering local programming to our League.

In 2017, Patty co-led her church in approving the raising of a Black Lives Matter flag that was followed by community-wide conversations with Winchester Police Chief Peter MacDonnell and the Multicultural Network founder, Sandy Thompson. In addition, she was instrumental in the WUS’s summer viewing of important new films, including “13th” and “*I Am Not Your Negro*.” She also hosted a forum for the LWVW, with guest speaker, Andrea James, whose work on the *Primary Caretaker Bill* was included in Criminal Justice Reforms in Massachusetts.

More recently, Patty established a partnership with MA Women of Color Coalition (MAWOCC) resulting in Facebook Live events and managed a Google Group for AROS (Anti-racism organizing in the suburbs). She continues her work at the church through a Racial Justice Team Planning Group, dedicated to the transformation of WUS as an “intentionally proactive, racially inclusive Multicultural anti-Racism congregation.”

Patty’s passion for social justice has challenged and inspired so many people that the League of Women Voters of Winchester is pleased to recognize and honor her work through this award.

If you would like to attend the award ceremony is the first presentation beginning at 10:00 am Saturday June 12th. All members and guests should go to <http://www.lwvwinchester.org/> to register your email address for the 2021 Annual Meeting Zoom link.