

# August 2020

FIND THE LATEST NEWS UPDATED EVERY DAY AT [BROOKLYNPAPER.COM](http://BROOKLYNPAPER.COM)

## BAY News

including **KINGS COURIER & FLATBUSH LIFE**

SERVING BENSONHURST, BRIGHTON BEACH, CONEY ISLAND, GERRITSEN BEACH, KINGS HIGHWAY, MANHATTAN BEACH, MIDWOOD, & SHEEPSHEAD BAY

# Your Vote, Your Voice

BY DR. CLAUDIA V. SCHRADER

A century ago, on August 18th, American women were guaranteed the right to vote. Four years later, Native Americans were granted that right too. Forty years later, in 1964, the Civil Rights Act was passed ensuring the rights of all men and women, regardless of race, religion, or education the right to vote. In 1965, the Voting Rights Act, landmark legislation that prohibited racial discrimination in voting was signed into law.

Passage of these laws did not come without struggle. In the fight for voting rights, some people mobilized, strategized, protested, died and suffered at the hand of others for the right to vote. As such was the case on March 7, 1965, when peaceful participants in a Selma to Montgomery march for voting rights were met by Alabama state troopers who attacked them with nightsticks, tear gas and whips after they refused to turn back. In that crowd were



Dr. Claudia V. Schrader, president of Kingsborough Community College, talks about voting and its historic impact on the national and local levels and the influence it can have on future planning.

young college students. One in particular, John Lewis—who at the time served as chairman of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, helped to organize the March on Washington and who would go on to serve as a member of the House of Representatives for 33 years — was severely beaten. Many

Americans were outraged by the violence against the marchers and the overall injustice against those who desired the right to vote. This, in part, led to the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1965.

Here we are, 55 years later. The country is less than 100 days away from Election Day 2020. There's an upswell of

concern about voter suppression, and the people are once again mobilizing, strategizing and protesting against and for a number of critical causes. Voting ensures that our voice is heard. When we vote, more goes into just choosing a person on the ballot; we're also taking action in deciding laws on health care, immigration, funding of housing, parks, roads and highways, public safety, employment, schools, living wages and taxes. On Election Day, we will have the chance to decide matters relating to our communities, our city, our state and our nation. Every vote counts, and every vote is counted.

If you're not sure if you are registered to vote, would like to request an absentee ballot, or would like to know where you can vote, please go online to [vote.org](http://vote.org) where you will find everything you need to vote.

There is a wealth of information online about the can-

didates and issues as well. Polling sites are open early and close late. Voting only takes a couple of minutes. And, many jurisdictions are required to have non-English ballots according to the Census information reported in the community. There is nothing that should stop you from voting.

John Lewis once said “there comes a time when you have to say something. You have to make a little noise. You have to move your feet. This is the time.” The time is now. November 3rd is right around the corner. It's time to make your voice heard and make some noise with your ballot.

*Dr. Claudia V. Schrader is president of Kingsborough Community College (KCC), a 72-acre academic oasis located in beautiful Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn. Kingsborough Community College is committed to enhancing learning opportunities for the Brooklyn community.*

To return to the homepage, [click here](#).