

A NATIONAL CALL TO ACTION:

**Teaching Young People about Women's Public Leadership
and Promoting Public Leadership for Girls**

Acknowledgments

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Catalyst for a National Conversation on Girls' Public Leadership and Civic Education

Over the past fifty years, women have achieved unprecedented success as leaders in every sector of our society. Yet women remain significantly underrepresented in elected and appointed offices. The roots of this public leadership gap start with our youngest citizens.

In their earliest classrooms, where their ideas about the world are being formed, children study the Founding Fathers and presidents like George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. They discover the stories behind major national holidays and major mileposts of American history. Yet female historical figures fare poorly in classroom curricula and textbooks, and no national holiday honors the accomplishments of a woman. Women's contributions to our nation's history and democracy are rendered nearly invisible in the classroom and in public discourse.

Lead researchers on gender bias in classrooms note: "When girls do not see themselves in the pages of textbooks... our daughters learn that to be female is to be an absent partner in the development of our nation".¹ Boys grow up thinking that public leaders look like them, but rarely are girls taught to envision themselves as leaders and innovators. This lack of attention to women's leadership has serious implications for the future of women serving in government.

Building on President Obama's challenge at the UN General Assembly in September 2011, the United States has joined countries around the world in a new international effort – the Equal Futures Partnership – to empower women politically and economically.² **The White House Conference on Girls' Leadership and Civic Education**, convened by the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Center for American Women and Politics at the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, was one element of the U.S. Government's commitment to promote political and economic equality for women and girls as part of the Equal Futures Partnership. This report is an overview of that conference and its outcomes. We hope it will serve as a blueprint for guiding educational initiatives, programming, and other interventions in the field of girls' leadership and civic education. [See Appendix A for full conference agenda.]

The conference, held on April 22, 2013, explored the nature of the public leadership gap and highlighted best practices in civic education – in our schools, youth serving organizations, media and elsewhere – to address it. Aimed at connecting girl empowerment and politics, **the conference explored the roots of the significant gender gap in public leadership and sought concrete, immediate ways to change how we educate, entertain and engage young people in order to expand the image of who can and does lead.**

A cross-sector mix of leaders from education (K-12 and post-secondary), youth-serving organizations, media, public office, business, and academe, along with selected young women who are active in civic and political life, met to launch a national conversation. Approximately 150 participants gathered at the White House to discuss these key questions:

- How do we teach young people about public leadership and the role of government in a way that engages girls and boys equally?
- How can we ensure that our civic education efforts inspire both boys and girls to envision themselves as future leaders in our government?
- How do we inform all our young people about the roles women play as leaders in government, from City Hall to the White House?

Why Now? A Historic Moment to Empower Women and Girls

In her opening remarks at the conference, Martha Kanter, undersecretary of the U.S. Department of Education, noted that it was an historic moment to think about what we can do, individually and collectively, to empower women and girls. Using the life story of Dr. Dorothy Height of the National Council of Negro Women as an illustration, Kanter began a process that would recur throughout the day: seeking out linkages between the worlds of civic education and women's empowerment. She highlighted the Department of Education's commitment to civic learning and described some of ED's efforts to date, such as the 2011 meeting of scholars that led to publication of *A Crucible Moment*, a report on civic learning and the future of democracy. She also mentioned the opportunities inherent in developing new curricular approaches, including the prospect of embedding civic learning in a meaningful way.

"This is an historic moment to think about what we can do, individually and collectively, to empower women and girls."

Martha Kanter, undersecretary
of US Department of Education

"We all play a role in closing the gender gap in public leadership – young people can aspire to be leaders in our communities and the country."

Jill Biden, Second Lady of the
United States

Dr. Jill Biden, a veteran educator, brought additional greetings to the conference. As a teacher, Biden stressed that education is not just what students learn in the classrooms. Her goal is always to inspire her students to "think big" about opportunities available to them. She mentioned examples of moments of inspiration that can help girls recognize their capacity to lead and change the world. Biden noted that every person in the room is an educator and has an impact on how young people view themselves as leaders. Biden stated: "We all play a role in closing the gender gap in public leadership – young people can aspire to be leaders in our communities and the country." In closing, Biden observed that "we are a nation of possibilities," made visible through the work of groups and individuals inspiring girls to serve as leaders, encouraging women to run for office, and telling young people

that there is nothing they can't achieve if they put their minds to it.

Lay of the Land: Exploring the Challenges of Women's Under-representation in Public Office and Girls' Perceptions of Leadership

Maria Teresa Kumar, founding executive director of Voto Latino, moderated a lively discussion on public leadership and the status of women in American politics today with panelists Donna Brazile, political analyst and commentator; Rob Candelino, vice president for branding at Unilever Skincare Business; Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, lead researcher at CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement); and Ruth B. Mandel, director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics and founding director and senior scholar at Eagleton's Center for American Women and Politics.

Current Status of Women in US Politics

Despite considerable progress since the earliest days of the modern women's movement and the first organized efforts to elect women, the numbers remain disappointingly low. As of March 2015, women hold 20 seats in the U.S. Senate and comprise just 19 percent of the U.S. House of Representatives; less than a quarter of state legislators are women and just six women governors lead states.³ In fact, upward progress in the number of elected women has slowed in recent years. In her remarks, Mandel cited four challenges to electing more women:

- Our long history and pervasive cultural definitions of leadership do not encompass women; the default image of political leadership remains male.
- The division of labor in American life remains heavily gendered, resulting in more opportunities, incentives and settings for men to display what is commonly labeled leadership. Women's traditional occupations in education, health care, and the service sector are rare launching pads for political careers.
- Despite shifting evidence, people assume that it is more difficult for women than men to raise political dollars and persuade voters to support them. Political gatekeepers, still predominantly male, still turn to people like themselves when seeking new candidates. Women often wait to be asked or encouraged to run, while men are more likely to be "self-starters."⁴
- The image of politics these days is not very attractive, and many women choose not to run, seeking other more palatable ways to change the world.

On the positive side, Mandel offered four reasons that women might decide to run:

- Women want to make a difference; when they encounter in their own lives problems that affect the larger society, they may turn to the political system for solutions.
- Women's traditional dedication to service can be extended beyond their homes and communities through government service; the ethic of doing good that once inspired women to become active in service organizations may lead them today into public office.

- Feminism may call women to run as they respond to a growing demand for equity and fair play and increasing evidence that women are needed in public leadership.
- Women may be viewed as the strongest candidates, especially in situations where their generally unsullied image may be a significant political asset.

Mandel asserted that change will not take place without intervention. She called for increased efforts to invite and encourage women to run and expanded work at the earliest stages to change the image of who can and does lead, so that the idea of women as political leaders becomes natural, appealing and inevitable.

Change the Discourse to Change the Government

Having more women in public office serves our democratic ideals of fairness – and, equally important, women office-holders change both the way government works and the policies it formulates. Our democracy will be stronger if we inspire a new generation of girls and young women to start down the public leadership path and educate all our young people about the important role women in government play.

Discussing why it matters that we have diverse elected officials, Brazile noted the value of including all voices in public discourse that shapes policies and communities. She insisted that “women must push forward – that we should no longer wait for the elevator, but simply climb up the stairs.” She sees an urgent need to close the ambition gap by teaching girls at an early age that they can and should become leaders. In her own childhood, she saw ordinary women who did extraordinary things – such as civil rights leader Fannie Lou Hamer – and she came to believe that she deserved a seat at the table.

Brazile noted that the media are often the source of problems. While there have been changes in how women leaders are portrayed, there are still salient differences in the coverage of women and men; for example, when men are passionate, it is seen as strength and compassion, but women who behave similarly may be labeled unstable or emotional.

Girls’ Perceptions of Leaders and Leadership

The only representative from the business world on the panel, Candelino noted that Dove shares a commitment to the advancement of women and girls, the brand’s primary market. Research conducted by Dove/Unilever showed that girls of all ages have definite ideas about leadership and what it means to be a leader. Their research findings note that girls’ “defined character traits for leadership reveal an impressive and aspirational range of skills and qualities, and the leaders cited by girls showcase a range of women—from high-profile figures such as Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama, to everyday women such as mothers and teachers.”⁵

Unilever’s national survey of girls aged 8-17 showed that “only half of girls see themselves as leaders, however, and the greatest single barrier to girls becoming leaders is a lack of self-confidence. The girls who do perceive themselves as leaders reported a high self-regard on a number of leadership skills and qualities and, therefore, are more likely to

aspire to be leaders. Self-image plays a strong role as well: girls who consider themselves leaders like the way they look and report a higher level of confidence.”⁶

The research gives us clues for intervention. When girls begin to perceive themselves as leaders, they begin to live different daily experiences; they have a more positive perception of themselves, and they are significantly more likely to believe a woman will be president in their lifetime. The study also found that girls who are leaders are significantly more likely to know a peer leader, suggesting that opportunities exist for peer to peer mentoring/intervention programs. The study also found that media are a source of hope and inspiration, yet set unrealistic perceptions that leaders are largely male-dominant.⁷

Engaging Girls and Young Women in Civic Leadership

According to research by CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement) and others, girls and young women are committed civic actors, leading their male counterparts on many indicators of civic engagement including volunteering, membership in community organizations, and voting. Yet women continue to lag in elected officeholding, and CIRCLE has identified five relevant “gaps” that may contribute to this gender leadership gap:

- an interest gap, with young women much less interested in political engagement than their male counterparts;
- a confidence gap, with women far less likely to claim some of the personal qualities that we value in our leaders;
- an expectations gap, because young women are less likely than their male peers to have been encouraged to pursue public leadership, despite the fact that women are as likely as men to be encouraged to run for student government positions;
- race and class gaps, since women of color and economically disadvantaged women are left far behind their counterparts in most indications of civic participation;
- an assessment gap, where standardized tests that ignore civic motivation or leadership and collaboration skills make it difficult to understand why there is a gender leadership gap or measure progress toward closing it.⁸

Kawashima-Ginsberg described recent developments in education that are helping to reframe civics and create innovative ways to acquire civic knowledge and skills; strategies may include not only classroom learning, but also community-based projects, games, and live simulations. Calls for a renewed focus on civic learning encompass K-12 as well as higher education. While expanded civic education should include all young people, she suggested that it is especially important to address “between- and within-gender gaps” so that American men and women of all backgrounds have equal voices in future political leadership.

Collective Wisdom: Challenges in Teaching Girls and Boys about Women's Public Leadership

Five discussion groups met to discuss challenges and opportunities in different fields in educating girls and boys about politics/civic engagement, women's political history, and girls' leadership. Discussion groups focused on girls' leadership, civic education, women's political leadership, and the media, addressing questions such as:

How does the portrayal of women and girls in the media contribute to boys' and girls' perceptions or beliefs about public/political leadership? What can the media do to change young people's impressions of what a public leader looks and acts like? What are some of the barriers and best practices? How can media outlets already reaching women and girls (or children in general) better incorporate civic education into their work, and how can media add to their work on girls' empowerment generally a more specific focus on engaging girls in public life? How can media outlets focusing on civic education incorporate a gender lens into their work?

What are the challenges to implementing or sustaining effective and innovative program activities? How can civic education groups and girls' or women's leadership groups collaborate to overcome these challenges? What are some successful and innovative programs or practices that best integrate girls' leadership/women's political leadership and civic education?

What do we know from research about how to create sustainable, effective women's leadership and civic education programs at the college level? What are examples of successful practices or programs around women's leadership and civic education? How can civic education and women's leadership programs work together or learn from each other to enrich the work of both?

What are the challenges at the personal (student) and institutional levels to encouraging civic education? What are some of the key challenges with regard to integrating civic education into the K-12 curriculum, particularly with regard to gender-based assumptions? What are some of the successful evidence-based programs or innovative practices to address these issues? What are some of the barriers to implementing, scaling up, or sustaining these practices and program activities? What strategies have been used to overcome these barriers?

Recurring themes across the discussion groups:

- **Girls have not internalized images of themselves as leaders.** Recent research for Unilever's Dove products found that only half of girls see themselves as leaders. What stands in their way: a lack of self-confidence.
- **Media** of all kinds play a pervasive role in shaping the images at the core of our assumptions about who can lead. As the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media reported, between 2006 and 2009, not one female character in politics was depicted in a G-rated film.⁹
- **Programs, books and games** where girls and women are seen leading can appeal to both boys and girls and be profitable; the outstanding contemporary example is *The Hunger Games*.

- Girls and young women who want to make a difference are encouraged to perform community service, but rarely get messages about **translating a desire to change the world into ambition to run for office**, where they could make change on a much larger scale.
- To have an **impact in education**, it is necessary for this topic to be addressed in classrooms as part of the curriculum.
- **Cross-pollination** is valuable. The mix of fields and experience(s) among the participants catalyzed fresh thinking about partnerships and possibilities. A top children’s programmer was intrigued by the idea of supplementing the network’s “Sci Girls” with “Poli Sci Girls.”
- Participants **need resources to try out new approaches**. An award-winning teacher reported that he wants to teach about women and people of color in politics, but can’t find age-appropriate, classroom-ready materials.
- **Role models** are tremendously important, both in daily life and in the media. This message is captured in the famous words of Marian Wright Edelman of the Children’s Defense Fund: You can’t be what you can’t see.
- **Mentors** are urgently needed at all stages of leadership development and career building.
- **Social media could be game changers**, but aren’t a panacea. Personal communication and interaction is still crucial.

It became clear that cultural perceptions and definitions of leadership have a tremendous impact on young people, that access – to role models, programs, and resources – is a major problem, and that structural issues need to be addressed for long-term change to happen.

Observations about cultural perceptions and definitions of leadership:

- **Leadership can have negative connotations for girls, and these negative connotations may make them leadership-averse.** Research by Carol Gilligan shows that around age 11, girls begin to hit a wall with regard to leadership, with confidence levels eroding throughout adolescence.¹⁰ More recently, Sheryl Sandberg points out that it is not popular for girls to be seen as strong leaders – “strong” is a positive trait for boys, but negative for girls.¹¹ Having girls see women in public leadership roles is critical for bridging this confidence gap, and it will also teach boys that women can and should be strong leaders.
- **There are inherent assumptions that boys and girls share about girls as leaders, and those assumptions make it difficult for girls who want to lead.** In the spring of 2013, a group of students at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts wrote a letter to the editor of the student newspaper decrying the lack of females in

the top student positions: only four student body presidents at the school since 1973 have been female, the most recent in 2003. The letter set off a firestorm of debate among the student population.¹² In a follow-up article by *The New York Times*, some students noted frankly that girls have to work harder to be taken seriously as leaders and that the boys who win tend to be seen as more personable.¹³ Work is urgently needed to challenge such assumptions, not just for girls, but for boys as well.

- **Expectations matter: girls and young women don't get the message that it's OK to run for office.** Recent research from American University demonstrates that young women are far less likely than young men to be encouraged by anyone to run for office.¹⁴ In addition, research from CIRCLE shows that while girls and young women are ahead of their male peers when it comes to many aspects of civic engagement, including volunteering and voting, they do not seek elected leadership roles at the same rates. One of the challenges moving forward will be helping girls learn that they can problem-solve by getting into leadership roles.¹⁵
- **This problem continues through college, where women still receive the message that elected positions should be held by men.** Despite being the majority on college campuses, women students hold a minority of leadership positions. Concerned about the fact that female students appeared to be stepping back from taking active leadership roles on campus, Princeton University formed the Steering Committee on Undergraduate Women's Leadership to study the issue. In 2011, the committee issued a report on its findings and recommendations for action. The report noted that although some women do run for elected office, many female students choose less visible jobs behind the scenes, appointive posts, or the less prominent elective offices. Even more disturbing was the finding that some women who expressed interest in more prominent posts were actively discouraged by other students, especially men.¹⁶
- **There is a leadership skills gap, particularly when it comes to civic leadership.** A lot of girls want to engage, but don't have or understand the skills needed for government or organizational leadership.

Observations about access to role models, programs, and resources:

- **The lack of visible and accessible role models** makes it hard for girls to visualize themselves in positions of public leadership. In research commissioned by Girl Scouts of the USA on girls aged 8-17, girls reported limited opportunities to interact with successful women, with only 1% mentioning community leaders as a type of adult they have had the opportunity to connect or interact with.¹⁷ When girls interact with or see women of all backgrounds in leadership roles, it makes them more likely to picture themselves in those roles and more likely to aspire to higher achievement themselves. Recent research on gender quotas in India found that in the villages with female leaders, the gender gap in educational aspirations was significantly reduced. The study "establishes that the role model effect reaches beyond the realm of aspirations into the concrete, with real educational impacts."¹⁸
- **Talk about women's leadership as a relay race, not a pipeline.** Ideally, women leaders would pass the baton to younger generations. Many already do this, formally and informally, but this pattern should be far more widespread.

- **Exclusivity is a problem.** Leadership programs are often aimed at single-focus groups. In addition, many students, but particularly those in low-income settings, have limited access to such programs. Special attention must be paid to make sure that the educational needs of widely diverse groups of girls are met.
- **When students think of running for office, they only think about Congress.** Teaching about local government is important because the local level is more accessible and has a more visibly direct impact on students' daily lives. Many students know about the issues affecting their communities, and they need to understand that they can make a difference right where they live.
- **Online programs aren't enough.** Girls still need face-to-face interaction, including engaging with aspirational role models on a personal level. In addition, many students do not have regular access to the internet.
- **One strategy or message does not fit all.** Different age groups relate to different messages and programs, so outreach must be appropriately tailored. For example, Dora the Explorer was groundbreaking and relatable for both boys and girls, for preschoolers, but not necessarily older children. Also, young people today receive and process information in new and different ways: they don't like top-down messages and don't want to be told what to do.

Observations about structural issues:

- **Narrowing the curriculum over the years forced civic education to the side.** Teachers need the tools, time, and resources to be effective and successful in the classroom. There is not a Common Core standard assessing civic engagement, which makes civic education in general a challenge, even before gender is factored in. The Education Commission of the States is a good resource for information about civic education in the states.¹⁹
- **Most curricula are test-based, which is a challenge when teaching civic engagement.** Because civic education seeks to prepare students for active citizenship, simply teaching about government and history is not enough. There are proven practices about what works with experiential learning programs in civic education, as noted in *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*.²⁰ An ongoing challenge is institutionalizing and scaling these practices out and ensuring that they are inclusive.
- **There is a gender gap in school administrative leadership.** While the proportion has grown significantly in the past twenty years, only about 24% of school superintendents are women.²¹ Women leaders would bring a different perspective to schools. Moreover, the dearth of women in leadership in schools perpetuates the image that leaders are men.
- **The lack of resources is a challenge for teachers, particularly when it comes to promoting social/civic engagement among students.** Teachers would benefit from more resources on civic engagement and women's leadership.

- **Women’s political history is largely absent from curriculum and textbooks.** According to the National Women’s History Project, only three states – Louisiana, Illinois and Florida – currently mandate that women’s history be taught in their K-12 classes.²² Besides the loss for all students of female perspectives and stories from the past, the consequence is that girls are deprived of a “road map” providing them a path toward leadership.
- **College students are disconnected from the concept of civic engagement.** The earlier students start to learn about civics, the better, but colleges and universities should continue to encourage civic learning. However, in an environment where college is perceived to be preparation for jobs, civics lessons may be seen as a frill.



Opportunities: New Ideas for Transforming Civic Education and Closing the Public Leadership Gap

What kind of commitments must be made to teach girls and boys about women's public leadership? How can the process of closing the leadership gap begin with our youngest citizens?

Dee Dee Myers, former White House press secretary and managing director, The Glover Park Group, led a discussion on new solutions for transforming civic education and closing the gender leadership gap. Panelists included David Kleeman, president, American Center for Children and Media; Prairie Rose Seminole, Native Vote Director, North Dakota; Amy Sichel, superintendent, Abington, PA School District and president-elect, American Association of School Administrators; Lidia Soto-Harmon, CEO, Girl Scouts of the Nation's Capital Council; and Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics.

Raising Consciousness, Presenting Role Models: Teach a Girl to Lead™

Walsh noted that experience and research at the Center for American Women and Politics have shown that many girls and young women are civically engaged and active members of their communities – most often through admirable volunteer service work. But in recent years, concerns have arisen about girls and women not having expressly political ambitions. And while young women do vote at rates similar to their male peers, they appear less inclined to run for elective office, preferring actual accomplishments to titles. In that context, it is critical to teach girls that issues they care about, the ones that motivate them toward volunteer service, are connected to government and politics. Young women need to discover the political realm as a place where they can do something, a channel for creating systemic change now or in the future. Even as girls are directed to service, they can start dreaming big and imagining themselves as elected officials.

Walsh stressed that the value of interventions that can point girls and women toward information and opportunities should not be understated. To bridge the gap between civic education and girls leadership, CAWP has established Teach a Girl to Lead™ (TAG), a national education and awareness campaign to re-envision what public leaders look like, inspire girls and young women to follow in their footsteps, and make women's political leadership visible to America's youth. Resources available through TAG help educate both boys and girls about the importance of civic participation and the significant roles women play in our democracy. This initiative targets audiences who directly work with youth, including parents, teachers, group leaders, librarians and students. For details, visit www.teachagirltolead.org.

CAWP will establish strategic alliances to promote this resource widely. Where these tools are employed, young people – both boys and girls – will learn from an early age that public leaders can look like their mothers, aunts and grandmothers. Ideally, the knowledge, confidence and motivation that girls and young women develop will mean that any one of them can look in the mirror and see a leader.

What Can School Districts Do to Promote Girls Leadership?

As noted in the earlier discussion, schools and teachers face challenges when teaching civics – namely time and resources. In her remarks, Sichel noted that K-12 schools need to focus more on women and women’s leadership and to create a culture of equity and participatory democracy, but also noted the paucity of credible data and metric benchmarks. She cited her own school district’s initiatives to narrow achievement gaps as examples of approaches to creating level playing fields in an educational setting.

In 2005, the Abington School District started the Opportunities to Learn initiative to narrow achievement gaps (race, gender, socioeconomic level, special needs). Strategies included opening up top classes to all students and working to ensure that as many students as possible from seventh grade up take honors and advanced placement classes. The results were that in the first year, there was an increased level of those participating, including women. Sichel noted that these are important steps, but further analysis is needed for better understanding of what’s happening in terms of gender equity. Schools could and should encourage girls’ leadership in athletics, student government and other extracurricular activities. Sichel notes that faculty and staff development is an important piece of the puzzle. As the first woman superintendent in her district, she recognized the importance of focusing on equity issues, engaging in dialogue with staff and getting them to be part of creating equity and participation.

Finally, Sichel noted that management and administrative teams can play a role in changing the culture. The number of female superintendents has grown from about a fifth ten years ago to almost a quarter today.²³ The growing number of women in school leadership positions will help, and more can be done to encourage women to take on these roles.

How Can We Reach Young Women?

Prairie Rose Seminole offered some perspective on what led her to step up as a young woman and what factors inspired her, sharing her personal story of being a young American Indian woman from a single parent family in poverty. For her, as for so many young people, there was a mentor who gave her validation and encouraged her to succeed. She also described how leaders in her Native American culture use storytelling as a leadership tool, pointing people toward ways of thinking about issues and solutions. When she found herself in a position to exert influence as a young Native American woman, she had to discover ways to speak out for the greater good; she would like to see ways of similarly validating other young people and giving them tools to use their gifts and leverage their voices.

Seminole also highlighted her experience as an appointee to city commissions. These appointments highlighted the importance of the ability to make change through government. Teaching more young women that they can amplify their voices through public leadership will be important. For her, sponsorship and intervention were crucial in furthering her success. She posed the question: how can we do this on a larger scale?

Opportunities for Making a Difference via Media

In his remarks, Kleeman noted that at present, few if any children's programs are focused specifically on public service or politics. The priorities for educational media have been in literacy, STEM and social learning, but there are opportunities. Data from the Geena Davis Institute shows ongoing imbalance of gender portrayals, and gaps in showing girls and women across the range of skills and professions in children's media.²⁴ The good news is that almost all studio executives surveyed agree that gender equality is important, and half say it could be achieved with little effort.²⁵

Kleeman noted that even if public service isn't the specific focus, media are providing characters who model elements that go into building leadership at different age and developmental levels. For example:

- **Aspiration** – The current top-rated preschool program is Disney Junior's Doc McStuffins – about an African American girl who wants to be a doctor like her mother, and "practices" on her dolls and stuffed animals. For Black History Month, "I'm Doc McStuffins" videos featured real African American woman doctors.
- **Preparation** – Public broadcasting's "SciGirls" shows student and professional scientists deeply engaged with, and explaining, the hard work that goes into exploration and discovery.
- **Role models** – All children and all leaders need to see lifelong learners and explorers like Dora or Miss Frizzle of Magic School Bus; some would even cite prime time characters like Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Print media companies like New Moon Girls also offer role models for girls.
- **Pride in intellect** – Leaders can't be afraid to know and show they're smart. "WordGirl" is the world's first superhero whose special power is her vocabulary.
- **Collaboration and mutual respect** – A US/Iraqi co-produced teen game show, "Salam Shabab" shows Iraqi teens working together to win, on teams that mix hometowns, religions, political affiliations and genders.

Kleeman noted that some of the best opportunities to build leadership lie in digital, interactive media:

- **Problem solving and modeling:** A growing number of girls are playing Minecraft, a massive online game where a child can build anything she can imagine...as long as she figures out how to mine and combine the necessary elements. Also, GoldieBlox offers construction kits aimed at girls, where the challenge to create is embedded in a story.

- Being a media creator, not just a consumer: Bill Gates spoke recently about the need for young people to learn to write code to bring their visions to life. There are several groups teaching youth to code, like Coder Dojo, and some of them specifically work with girls, including Girls Who Code and Black Girls Code.
- Decisions with consequences: In high quality simulation games like Sim City, for example, players' choices have consequences for their virtual world; understanding and anticipating complex ramifications is elemental to public service and politics.
- Multi-faceted portrayals: Much of the writing on developing girls' and young women's engagement with public service talks about demonstrating that a person can be many things; politics can be a "yes and," not an "either/or." eBooks offer huge multi-media opportunities to dig into stories beneath the surface, to see real-life leaders as complex people.
- Building confidence: The Dove research found that girls' fear of failure grows from primary school through to the teen years. This suggests an opportunity to engage the video game industry because, to quote Harvard Ed School professor and Scholastic Education executive David Dockterman: "One of the reasons video games are so compelling is that you fail a bunch of times before you 'win.' Without the struggle there's little satisfaction. You try, find out right away that you failed, adjust and repeat the process likely several more times. And when you finally figure it out, it feels pretty good."

Finally, Kleeman stressed the importance of keeping perspective about the role and possibilities of media, relative to building leadership in real life. He cited the observation of a speaker he heard recently who noted that media isn't most useful as the idea itself, but as the amplifier of the idea.

Teaching Leadership to Girls: Hands-On Learning

Responding to questions from Myers about the best ways to teach girls how to be leaders, Soto-Harmon focused on GSUSA's work to build leadership through hands-on leadership programs. She noted that Girl Scout initiatives aim to develop leadership skills in girls of all ages. Girl Scouting has 57 million alumnae (including many of the women at the conference). The network of Girl Scout alumnae is not only large, but powerful; it includes, for example, all of the women who have served as U.S. Secretaries of State. This is a perfect network to transmit messages about women and public leadership. Girl Scouts of the USA is over 100 years old, and in retooling for next 100 years, three leadership tools are paramount: discover, connect, and take action. When girls do this, they become advocates for themselves and others, and that's what makes a difference.



The Girl Scout Gold Award represents the highest achievement in Girl Scouting and also a potentially valuable entrée into public leadership. Girls work on a two-year, seven-step process to solve a community problem—not only in the short term, but for the future. The seven steps – which could be appropriate to any community problem-solving effort – include: 1. Identify an issue; 2. Investigate it thoroughly; 3. Get help and build your team; 4. Create a plan; 5. Present your plan and gather feedback; 6. Take action; and 7. Educate and inspire.²⁶

An experiential program like the Girls Scouts' Gold Award teaches young people the power of policy and government and how to advocate for change, not just in games or simulations but in the real world. For example, a one Girl Scout undertook a project related to truck safety on a local highway; her research and advocacy – and a fatal truck accident – ultimately led the state to ban big rigs from the highway in question.²⁷

Other Girl Scout programs, like the DC Congressional Aide program, teach civic leadership. Almost 60 girls a year spend a week being a congressional staffer on Capitol Hill. In the past five years, Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital has partnered with over 100 congressional offices and federal agencies to offer this program.²⁸

Interventions: Where and How Can We Move the Needle?

In addition to the examples provided by the panelists, the discussion groups yielded valuable examples of current successful practices and new ideas to pursue. The list generated is by no means exhaustive, but it begins to suggest the kinds of interventions that already exist or could be expanded upon. Many of these interventions serve as models and exhibit potential for replication.

1. Experience-based Learning about Civic Engagement and Leadership

Several programs around the country encourage students to become civic leaders. Additionally, some programs specifically aimed at girls and young women offer points of entry or connections. Skills-based training on politics and civic leadership was cited by many experts at the conference as an effective way to inform and engage young people, and particularly young women. If girls feel hesitant to get involved, teaching them the skills needed for public leadership has the potential to inspire and activate them.

When given the opportunity, girls and young women can see themselves moving into leadership roles. They can identify with the political thought process; finding a trigger that gets them in the door and thinking about engaging in politics. Talking about the opportunity to move from civics to politics works well with students; the challenge is finding ways to scale up effectively.

Below are examples of experiential learning programs aimed at different age groups and in different settings. Many of them include a gender focus.

Post-secondary programs:

- **NEW Leadership™:** The NEW Leadership™ program, created by the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) over two decades ago, is an intensive, week-long residential bi-partisan summer institute to educate college women about the political process and teach them to become effective leaders. The model has been “exported” to more than two dozen other campuses around the country. NEW Leadership™ programs have already taught almost 5,000 college women the whys and hows of getting political and introduced them to scores of political women of all kinds, inevitably including at least a few with whom they can identify closely. Some have run for office, many are working in politics, government and non-profit advocacy, and most are far more politically engaged than they were – or dreamed of being – before enrolling in the program.²⁹ As one student told CAWP, “I came with no knowledge of politics ... and I’m leaving with a determination of pursuing a career in politics and helping others.”



- **Elect Her – Campus Women Win:** Elect Her – Campus Women Win encourages and trains college women to run for student government and future political office. A collaboration between the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and Running Start, Elect Her addresses the need to expand the pipeline to women running for office and to diminish the longstanding political leadership gender gap. Campus administrators, students, and local AAUW members collaborate with AAUW and Running Start staff to plan the half-day trainings each year. Participants practice hands-on campaign skills, hear from inspiring local speakers, and discuss research on women in government. Fifty campuses hosted Elect Her in 2013–14.³⁰
- **The Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN):** The Public Leadership Education Network prepares college women for leadership in the public policy arena. Each year, PLEN brings hundreds of women students from colleges and universities across the country to Washington, DC to experience first-hand how public policy is shaped and implemented at the national level. Students meet with and learn from female leaders making and influencing public policy at the highest levels in Congress, the courts, federal agencies, the private sector, policy research and advocacy organizations, and the media. Founded by a consortium of women’s colleges in 1978, PLEN includes as members some of the nation’s oldest women’s colleges: College of Notre Dame, Douglass Residential College of Rutgers University, Mount Holyoke College, Mount St. Mary’s College, Newcomb College Institute of Tulane University, Smith College, St. Catherine University, and Wesleyan College.³¹
- **Student Representation on City Councils:** This is not a program but an illustration of a best practice. The City of Ames, Iowa created a nonvoting ex-officio council seat for a member of the Iowa State University Government of the Student Body.³² This helps establish better communications between students and the city council and also shows students the value of political engagement.
- **LEAD Program:** Offered by the Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL). LEAD supports and encourages UMSL students’ civic engagement and instills in them a passion for women’s public sector leadership. LEAD offers sessions on: community service; examining different leadership styles; effective leadership strategies; guided networking; salary negotiations; and opportunities to interact with successful private and public sector women leaders. Participants also work together to complete a semester-long leadership project that showcases their leadership skills. Upon successful completion of the program, students may choose to be matched with a mentor for the spring semester.³³

K-12-based programs:

- **Girls: Oregon, Action, Leadership, Service (GOALS):** Offered by Center for Women’s Leadership at Portland State University in collaboration with the YWCA of Greater Portland and Girls Inc. of the Pacific NW, GOALS includes a summit and a year-long leadership program. During the program, high school girls develop leadership skills, learn to empower themselves, build social action skills, and hear from an all-star lineup of women leaders from across all sectors.³⁴

- **Oregon Women Making a Difference:** Commemorating the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage in Oregon in 2012, the Center for Women’s Leadership at Portland State University developed a Women’s Leadership 6th-12th grade curriculum, consisting of four 50-minute lessons and a culminating project where students interviewed women in their community. A free companion Oregon Women Firsts poster for social studies classrooms features 14 Oregon women leaders in a variety of fields.³⁵

- **Young Women’s Political Leadership Program:** Running Start’s Young Women’s Political Leadership Program introduces 50 high school girls to the importance of political leadership. This five-day retreat in July includes workshops led by experts on public speaking, messaging, networking, on-camera media training, and platform development. The goal of the program is to encourage girls to channel their leadership ambitions into politics.³⁶

- **IGNITE:** Founded to build young women’s political ambition and train them to run for office, IGNITE serves young women (14-22) in their own communities, with an emphasis on those that are underserved. IGNITE runs political and civic education and training programs that are delivered on site in California and Texas high schools. College women are hired and trained to deliver the program to high school students, building their own leadership and mentoring skills. IGNITE meets after school for 3 hours a week, throughout the school year. The curriculum uses a social justice framework to train participants in: civic and political education with a special focus on how local government works; women in office: why gender parity matters; policy issues; leadership skills including public speaking, organizing, planning, and communication; and becoming a community leader. Central to the IGNITE model is introducing female candidates and elected officials to participants, so students can learn firsthand about running for and holding elective office.³⁷

- **The Black Youth Project (BYP):** BYP is based on three core components: knowledge, voice and action. BYP produces research about the ideas, attitudes, decision-making, and lived experiences of African American youth, especially in relation to their political and civic engagement. The BYP web site was designed as a cyber-resource for black youth and those who are committed to enriching the lives of black youth. Their website provides a platform for the ideas, views and perspectives of young African American writers.

2. Teaching Civic Leadership in Classrooms (with a Gender Focus)

In their *Guardian of Democracy* report, the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools outlines six proven practices in civic learning : providing formal classroom instruction on government and civics; adding discussion of current events and issues in the classroom; implementing service learning programs which link community service with formal classroom instruction; offering students opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities; encouraging meaningful participation in school governance; and encouraging students to participate in simulations of democratic processes.³⁸ This presents an opportunity to build on those practices by incorporating gender into them. 1. T.

The programs listed below do not have a specific gender focus, but they serve as models or tools for incorporating civics into classrooms and have potential for gender focus.

- **Civics and Government Institute at Montclair High School (NJ):** Founded in 1997, the Civics & Government Institute (CGI) is a learning community at Montclair High School that focuses on the study of citizenship, government, and social issues. Students who join the Institute in their sophomore year participate in student-run government, debates, elective courses, international relations, community service partnerships, and courses in US History and British and American Literature. Throughout their three years in the Institute, students are given opportunities to develop leadership skills to be used during their years at the high school and in the future. The Civics and Government Institute provides an educational environment through which students can develop an understanding of their roles as functioning members of the community, state, nation, and the world.³⁹ While this program does not have a specific gender focus, three female students from the school (who attended the conference) succeeded in their online campaign to select a woman to moderate one of the presidential debates.⁴⁰
- **We the People:** Developed by the Center for Civic Education, We the People promotes civic competence and responsibility among the nation's upper elementary and secondary students. We the People offers a textbook, an enhanced e-book, and simulated congressional hearings. Since its inception in 1987, more than 28 million students and 75,000 educators have participated in the We the People Program.⁴¹
- **Service Learning Requirements:** Some schools, particularly private schools, have service learning requirements. Others might be encouraged to incorporate service learning – with a particular emphasis on civic engagement – into their curricula. Many youth leadership programs already teaching or encouraging service. The next challenge is to use service learning to make the connection with politics and government.

3. Mentoring and Role Models in Women's Political Leadership

The concepts of role models and mentoring were frequent themes during the conference. Many participants agreed that role models can be an effective way to inspire more young women to participate, at any level from voting on up to public leaders themselves. Making aspirational role models available for girls is an important aspect of closing the gender gap in women's public leadership. Below are examples of new and successful mentoring/role modeling programs that could be expanded or replicated:

- **AAUW Mentoring Program:** AAUW has partnered with MentorCloud to bridge mentoring and social media.⁴² The AAUW Mentoring Program is an online platform that allows a person to create a profile, self-identify as a mentor or mentee, search among hundreds of women for a good match, and arrange for continued communication that fits the mentor's schedule.⁴³
- **MAKERS: Women Who Make America series (MAKERS.com):** Makers.com is a digital platform showcasing thousands of compelling stories – both known and unknown – from trailblazing women in their fields. This video initiative was developed by AOL and PBS. It gives the public the opportunity to view interviews with women leaders anytime, anywhere. Viewers can search videos by topic (including politics).⁴⁴
- **Mentoring programs with elected women leaders:** Programs around the country connect women elected officials with girls and young women in their communities. The opportunity to connect and develop a relationship with women public leaders is invaluable for young people, but more such programs are needed to ensure widespread access. Some examples include:
 - **Young Women's Leadership Program:** Women in Government, a national, nonpartisan organization of women state legislators, created the Young Women's Leadership Program to demonstrate hands-on leadership and mentoring for the next generation of women civic and political leaders. Young women are invited to attend Women in Government conferences and connected with legislators, the Board of Directors, and the Business Council for mentoring.
 - **Young Women's Leadership Institute (New Jersey):** New Jersey Assemblywoman Caroline Casagrande developed this program to encourage outstanding 11th grade female students from her district to become leaders. As part of the program, students meet regularly with the Assemblywoman and other women leaders, develop a community service project, and take field trips to the State House and county courthouse.

4. Media Messaging

The success of series like *Hunger Games* shows that female protagonists can sell books/movies. More stories can be told with strong female leads; both boys and girls watch/read stories with female leaders, and these stories influence both boys and girls. Some ideas offered included highlighting more women in incidental leadership roles. For example, a character who is an elected official could be a woman. Other questions raised included how to highlight the leaders already being shown. All agreed that role models of real girls are needed, so every girl can picture herself in each story. How can we tell the stories of real girls via mass media? One conference attendee noted that civic engagement is a process over a period of someone's life, while media engagement is in and out. Girls need to see strong, relatable characters consistently engaged. For example, characters in a show go to a particular club or work on a community issue all year – not superficially but more as an embodiment of their personalities.

Participants also noted that online media can play a significant role. According to The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, fully 95% of those aged 12-17 use the internet, and eight in ten online teens use social media in some form.⁴⁵ To have an impact, using social media to teach young people about civic leadership should be explored on a deeper level. Several ideas merit further discussion:

- According to Common Sense Media, three-quarters of children aged 8 and under have access to some type of "smart" mobile device at home (e.g. smartphone, tablet).⁴⁶ How do we harness the power of these devices?
- Contrary to the frequent assumption that youth are not engaged in politics, recent research shows that they are participating in new ways that are different from previous generations, particularly via new media. A report from The MacArthur Research Network on Youth and Participatory Politics (YPP) demonstrates that substantial numbers of young people across racial and ethnic groups are engaging in "participatory politics" — acts such as starting a political group online, circulating a blog about a political issue, or forwarding political videos to friends. The acts are interactive, peer-based, and do not defer to elites or formal institutions. They are also tied to digital or new media platforms that facilitate and amplify young people's actions.⁴⁷ More work could be done to evaluate how young people, and girls in particular, use online resources and how to reach them through those channels to teach them to seek public leadership.
- Research from the Girl Scout Research Institute showed that that some girls cite friends or classmates as role models for setting higher academic and personal goals.⁴⁸ To harness the power of peer influence on a larger scale, could we create a storytelling platform for girls to share with other girls? Could we work with major social media outlets to create such a platform?



5. Strategic Partnerships

We can build bridges between the organizations that do civic education and the organizations that do girls' leadership/empowerment. Organizations like the Girls Leadership Institute, Girl Scouts of the USA, and Girls, Inc. offer terrific programs for girls of all ages. We need to find ways to further encourage them to add civic engagement and political participation to their agendas as they design programs to serve girls. On the same note, organizations already offering civic education programs could work to incorporate gender and women's leadership into their programming. Ideally, partnerships could be formed to facilitate these goals.

6. Teaching Civic Engagement in the College/University Setting

Colleges and universities should examine their own experience with regard to women in leadership roles, and where they find unexplained drop-offs, they should make concerted efforts to encourage women's leadership on their campuses.

Colleges and universities could play a greater role in encouraging women to seek public leadership roles. While many schools already have programming, they often exist in silos or reach particular segments of the student populations. To have a broad impact, it will be important to intervene on a larger scale. Possible interventions for further discussion include:

- Creating online courses on civic education, with a gender focus.
- Incorporating gender studies courses into government/civic education courses and vice versa, and making civic education courses a requirement. For example, Stanford University has an Education for Citizenship general education requirement for all freshman and transfers, and it includes a gender study or studies component.⁴⁹ More schools could incorporate such requirements into the curriculum. The Association of American Colleges and Universities offers extensive resources on civic learning.⁵⁰
- College orientation programs could have a civic component, so that college students are reached very early in their engagement on campus.
- Colleges and universities could encourage programs for formal internships in civic learning. For example, the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University offers programs for both graduate and undergraduate students. The Eagleton Fellowship program provides select Rutgers graduate students from any discipline the opportunity to further their understanding of government, public affairs, and the practice of



politics, and connect the fellowship experience to their chosen fields of study. The Eagleton Undergraduate Associates explore applications of political science to the practice and processes of American politics. This certificate program is open to juniors in any Rutgers school or discipline.⁵¹

- Schools could encourage all disciplines to incorporate civic education into their curriculum, to help translate what they are learning into real world. For example, a psychology major could learn about professional organizations like the state licensing board for psychologists and how s/he could get involved. This will help make the link to government and policy real for a broader swath of students.



Conclusion

There is a need for more women public leaders in the United States, and the relative invisibility of women in political history as currently taught contributes to the problem. Given some of the barriers to girls seeing themselves and others as leaders, coupled with research showing that there are real gaps that cause problems, it is clear that new strategies and greater efforts should be undertaken to encourage girls to pursue public leadership.

The good news is that there already exists terrific work being done in a variety of sectors – nonprofit, media, education, and business – to encourage fostering leadership in girls and young women. Moreover, a number of youth-serving organizations, women’s leadership initiatives, and civic education programs already seek to teach our nation’s youth to be active and engaged citizens. The question at hand is how to build on this work to teach girls that they can, and should, seek public leadership. In addition, more work is needed to elevate the importance of engaging women and girls in politics and public leadership in the national consciousness.

This conference can be the starting point for an ongoing national conversation about civic engagement and public leadership and the role of women and girls. Looking forward, this is a “call to action” to make girls’ leadership in government a top priority for all stakeholders.



Appendix A
Conference on Girls' Leadership and Civic Education
The White House
April 22, 2013

9:00 - 9:30am: Opening Speakers

Welcoming Remarks: Valerie Jarrett, Senior Advisor to President Obama

Opening Remarks: Martha Kanter, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education

9:30 - 10:45am: Morning Panel

The Challenge - The Nature and Roots of the Public Leadership Gap

Moderator: Maria Teresa Kumar, Founding Executive Director, Voto Latino

Panelists:

Donna Brazile, Political Analyst and Commentator, Syndicated Columnist, Author and Adjunct Professor,
Georgetown University

Rob Candelino, Vice President, Branding, Unilever Skincare Business

Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, Lead Researcher, CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and
Engagement)

Ruth B. Mandel, Director, Eagleton Institute of Politics and Board of Governors Professor of Politics at Rutgers University

11:00 - 12:15pm: Breakout Sessions

Integrating civic education and girls' leadership/women's political leadership

Facilitator: Roberto Rodriguez, Special Assistant to the President for Education Policy, White House Domestic Policy Council

Integrating civic education and girls' leadership/women's political leadership

Facilitator: Jonathan Greenblatt, Director of the White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation

Influencing/changing media portrayals of girls, particularly with regard to leadership

Facilitator: Tina Tchen, Executive Director, White House Council on Women and Girls, Chief of Staff to the First Lady

Integrating civic education and women's political leadership into the college and university setting

Facilitator: Seth Galanter, Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Civil Rights

Incorporating civic education and girls' leadership into the K-12 setting

Facilitator: Deborah Delisle, Assistant Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education



12:30 – 1:30pm: Lunch

Lunch #1

Welcome and Introduction of Keynote Speaker:

Deborah Delisle, Assistant Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

Keynote Speaker: Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D- ND)

App Demonstration: Andrew Cavanagh presents "Ready to Run," an Equal Futures App Challenge "Notable App"

Lunch #2

Welcome and Introduction of Keynote Speaker:

Tina Tchen, Executive Director, White House Council on Women and Girls, Chief of Staff to the First Lady

Keynote Speaker: Senator Susan Collins (R-ME)

App Demonstration: Laura Phelps presents "Ready to Run," an Equal Futures App Challenge "Notable App"

1:45 – 3:00pm: Afternoon Panel

The Solutions – New Ideas for Transforming Civic Education and Closing the Public Leadership Gap

Moderator: Dee Dee Myers, Managing Director, The Glover Park Group; former White House Press Secretary

Panelists:

Lidia Soto-Harmon, CEO, Girl Scouts of the Nation's Capital Council

David Kleeman, President, American Center for Children and Media

Prairie Rose Seminole, Native Vote Director, North Dakota

Amy Sichel, Superintendent, Abington, PA School District; President-Elect, American Association of School Administrators

Debbie Walsh, Director, Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University

3:00 – 3:15pm: Closing Remarks

Closing Speaker:

Tina Tchen, Executive Director, White House Council on Women and Girls, Chief of Staff to the First Lady

3:30 – 5:30pm: Reception



Appendix B

List of Participants at Conference on Girls' Leadership and Civic Education

April 22, 2013

Julia Alanen
Deputy Director
Street Law, Inc.

Lucienne Beard
Executive Director
Alice Paul Institute

Jennifer Bremner
Director, Skin Brand Building
Unilever

Carey Albertine
President
In This Together Media

Crystal Bell
Member Strategist
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Dana Brown
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Center for Women and
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Dyan Alexander
Director Policy and Programs
Women in Government

Concetta Bencivenga
Executive Director
generationOn

Daniel Brown
Teaching Ambassador Fellow
US Department of Education

Cynthia Apalinski
Teaching Ambassador Fellow
US Department of Education

Siobhan "Sam" Bennett
CEO/President
She Should Run

Amanda Brown
National Political Director
Rock the Vote

Emma Axelrod
Montclair High School

Yorri Berry Harris
Founder
STEM Sister Summit

Alison Bryant
CEO & Chief Play Officer
PlayCollective & Playscience

Jennifer Bado-Aleman
Washington Teaching Ambassador
Fellow
U.S. Department of Education

Connie Booth
Vice President, Product Development
Sony Computer Entertainment America

Victoria Budson
Executive Director
Women and Public Policy Program,
Harvard Kennedy School

Margaret Barton
Principal
Barton Strategies/Maggie's List

Lindsey Bowen
Program Director
Junior Statesmen Foundation

Julie Burton
President
Women's Media Center

Catherine Beane
Senior Policy Analyst, Human & Civil
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National Education Association

Erin Braun
Director of Outreach
iCivics

Jessica Byrd
Manager of State Strategies
EMILY's List



Alice Cahn
VP Social Responsibility
Cartoon Network

Jean Margaret Smith
Senior Vice President, Public Affairs
Nickelodeon

Mary Cathcart
Co-Director
Maine NEW Leadership™

Andrew Cavanagh
Software Architect and Co-Founder
Tortuca Labs

Monica Cevallos
Associate
Latinovations/Dewey Square Group

Christy Chambers
President
Council for Exceptional Children

Mia Charity
Chief Development Officer
Close Up Foundation

Rachna Choudhry
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POPVOX.com

Ana Cid
Political Education Initiative Committee
Member
Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc.

Lisa Clarke
Teaching Ambassador Fellow
US Dept. of Education

Cathy Cohen
Founder and Director
Black Youth Project at the University of
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Cari Cook
Executive Director
Delta Delta Delta

Amanda Coolidge
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Feminist Majority Foundation

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Dawn Culpepper
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Discovery Communications

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Cherie Elfenbein
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Nancy Ewert
Program Coordinator, NEW Leader-
ship™ Texas
The University of Texas at Austin

Kate Farrar
Director, Campus Leadership Programs
Organization
American Association of University
Women (AAUW)

Jaime Festa-Daigle
Teacher
Lake Havasu Unified School District

Deborah Forte
President, Scholastic Media
Scholastic Inc

Kurt Fulepp
General Manager, MAKERS
AOL Inc.



Edelmira Garcia
Data and Campaigns Manager
NALEO Educational Fund

Melissa Hillebrenner
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Kathy Kleeman
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Melyssa Gomez
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Alice Hockenbury
Director of Advocacy
Girl Scouts of the USA

David Kleeman
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American Center for Children and
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Joanne Goodwin
Director
Women's Research Institute of Nevada

Aubrey James
Collegiate Representative
Delta Delta Delta

Haviva Kohl
President
Strong Women, Strong Girls

Mary Gordon
Constituency Group Programs Director
National League of Cities

Lara Kaufmann
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Francine Lawrence
Executive Vice President
American Federation of Teachers

Tamara Gould
Senior Vice President
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Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg
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Wanda King
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President
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Mikki Halpin
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Glamour

Elizabeth Kiss
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Naomi Long
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Nina Harmon
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MAKERS: Women Who Make America

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Benita Mosley
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Jean Mrasek
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Miss Hall's School

Kaneisha Northern
Founder and Executive Director
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Richard Ochoa
Teacher
Alta High School

Jessica O'Connell
Founder & President
Youth Trek

Lora O'Connor
Co-Founder
California Women's Innovator Network

Elizabeth Ossoff
Professor
Saint Anselm College

Sunny Petit
Executive Director
Center for Women, Politics & Policy

Laura Phelps
Developer
Tortuca Labs



Sarah Pierz
Research Coordinator
EMILY's List

Mallory Schwarz
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Republican Majority for Choice

Brenan Smith-Evans
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Mikva Challenge

Saira Rao
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In This Together Media

Prairie Rose Seminole
Cultural Advisor
Sanford Health

Lidia Soto-Harmon
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Ryane Ridenour
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Kellie Ferguson
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MissRepresentation.org

Kristi Tate
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National Conference on Citizenship
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Sammi Siegel
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Heather Smith
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Deborah Walsh
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Megan Williams
President
Hardy Girls Healthy Women

Julie Willig
Grassroots Officer
United Nations Foundation

Chelsea Wilson
Community Outreach Liaison
Cherokee Nation

Andrea Wolf
Director of Public Policy
Girls Inc.

Christine Woysner
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