



2020 STATE CONFERENCE

**VOTES
RIGHTS
EQUALITY
NOTHING LESS**



NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN OF NEW JERSEY



New Jersey NOW
2020 State Conference
September 15 –
October 3, 2020
Online

In 2020, New Jersey NOW celebrates 45 years of grassroots activism in the state.

2560 Route 22 East, #265, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076
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We are a “think-and-do tank”

New Jersey Policy Perspective drives policy change to advance racial and economic justice and prosperity for all New Jerseyans through evidence-based, independent research, analysis and advocacy.

“

The best way for our leaders to show their support of calls for justice is to overwhelm their words with swift and direct action.”

NJPP

**NEW JERSEY
POLICY
PERSPECTIVE**

Votes. Rights. Equality. Nothing Less.

2020 was never going to be a normal year. Four years ago we were so hopeful. And even after that November day, we cried and marched together, all the while promising ourselves and each other, that 2020 would be the year we would take back our country. 2020 also marks the hundredth anniversary of the signing of the 19th amendment; yet another milestone in our collective Feminist journey.

In planning this conference, we wanted to be intentional in paying homage to that legacy, the abolitionists and suffragists that started the first women's movement. To honor all the second-wave NOW feminists who fought against inequality, on whose shoulders we stand today. And although the next generation has picked up the mantle and the word feminist is once again being embraced by our youth, our work is not done; as we will not settle for anything less than full equality under the law.

Votes. Rights. Equality. Nothing Less.

If nothing else, the past four years have taught us just how fragile our democracy is. Institutions we previously thought were solid have shown themselves to be hollow. The only thing that has stood in the way of this onslaught on our democracy has been US. The advocates. The grassroots movements. The Indivisibles, the Swing-Lefts, the NOWs. The silver lining from the 2016 election has been the wave of activism that has swept across the country, the blue tsunami that flipped the house in 2018. And the record shows that the wave was fueled by women. Here, in New Jersey, we flipped four Congressional districts! WE did it then and WE will do it again!

The pandemic threw another curve ball at us. And recent events with the passing of Justice Ginsburg have once again reinforced just how fragile progress can be. But we are resilient. And there are also bright sparks. In New Jersey, the last three years have shown what is possible under a progressive administration. A \$15 minimum wage, the most comprehensive pay equity law, expanded family leave and earned sick days, a law that establishes New Jersey as the nation's leader in environmental justice, and just this week – a millionaire's tax! But we are not done. New Jersey NOW is working on an aggressive legislative agenda with our partners on issues such as menstrual equity, consent-based sex education and just yesterday, we announced a bill to ensure and expand access to abortion in the state.

So buckle up fellow Feminists, 2020 is not done yet. We must do everything in our power to KEEP THE HOUSE, FLIP THE SENATE and ELECT BIDEN and HARRIS! And if we do, that long awaited dream of the ERA, the Equal Rights Amendment will become enshrined into the United States Constitution!

#EQUALITY!


ANJALI MEHROTRA
PRESIDENT, NEW JERSEY NOW
@ANJALINOW

Thank You

WE EXTEND OUR GRATITUDE TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 2019-2020 NEW JERSEY NOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, AND THE STATE BOARD.

THIS CONFERENCE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE DEICATED MEMBERS OF THE STATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE WHO HAVE BEEN PLANNING THIS EVENT FOR MONTHS.

WE ALSO THANK THE BYLAWS REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THEIR WORK UPDATING OUR BYLAWS.

WE ARE PARTNERING WITH COLAB ARTS TO CREATE ARTISTIC PIECES FROM THE ORAL HISTORIES WE COLLECTED AS PART OF OUR INTERGENERATIONAL FEMINIST PROJECT



coLAB Arts' vision is to create more livable, sustainable, and exciting environments through art. coLAB Arts engages artists, social advocates, and communities to create transformative new work.

coLAB-arts.org

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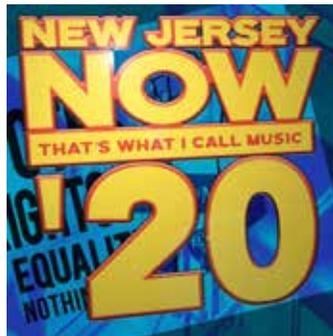
- Katie Brennan
- Veronica Guarraia
- Janice McClean
- Anjali Mehrotra
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- Joseph Shelley
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WE WOULD BE REMISS IF WE DID NOT THANK OUR INDIVIDUAL SPONSORS, PRASHANT MEHROTRA, SUSAN WALDMAN AND KAITLYN WOJTOWICZ. YOUR GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT IS APPRECIATED.



CLICK ON THE IMAGES ABOVE TO DOWNLOAD OUR SPOTIFY PLAYLIST OR ORDER CONFERENCE MERCHANDISE

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10 Conversations

14 InterSectional

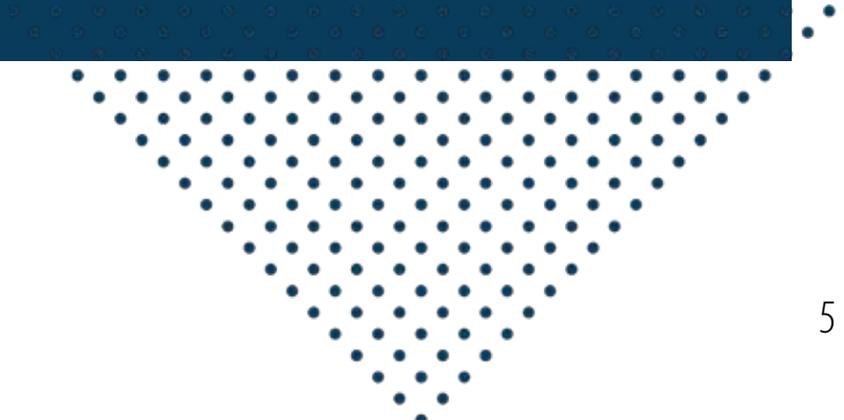
Meet our candidates for State Officers for the 2020-2022 New Jersey NOW. We are excited to have a slate that is diverse and young, bringing fresh ideas and enthusiasm to our board. While Katie Brennan, Anjali Mehrotra, and Linda Weber are returning to their current positions, we welcome newcomers Saily Avelenda, Aisha Mapp, Isha Mehrotra, Danni Newbury, and Joseph Shelley.

20 InterGenerational

In our first oral HERstory project we paired our long-time activists with young persons starting their own activist journey. We are proud to feature seasoned feminists - Bear Atwood (Vice-President, National NOW), Judy Buckman (President, South Jersey NOW), Alice Cohan (Political Director, Feminist Majority), Skip Drumm and Dr. Alan Gross (Middlesex County), Joanie Parks (Ocean County and Union County), Mareta Short (Former President - NOW New Jersey), and Susan Waldman (Morris County). Many thanks to our young feminists who conducted the interviews and authored the pieces - Lexi Abrams, Vishwa Bhatt (2019 NOW-NJ intern), Zhamilya Bilyalova, Annabelle Jin, Isha Mehrotra, Shree Mehrotra, and Katie Zimmermann (2020 NOW-NJ intern).

36 Speakers

40 Remembering Rick





DO NOT.



FORGET.

MAKE YOUR VOICE



heard.
NEW JERSEY DEMOCRATIC STATE COMMITTEE



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196 WEST STATE STREET, TRENTON, NJ 08608
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SATURDAY, 3 OCTOBER, 1:00PM

Agenda

- 12:30 PM Zoom Room opens for Credentialing
- 1:00 PM Business Meeting/Call to Order/Adopt Agenda
- 1:15 PM Welcome messages
- 1:30 PM Adoption of Bylaws Changes/Election of State Officers
- 2:00 PM Adjourn Business Meeting

- 2:00 PM Program Meeting (to be live streamed)
- 2:15 PM Senator Cory Booker
- 2:30 PM *Getting Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable*
Dr. Khyati Y. Joshi – Keynote address
- 3:15 PM Elect More Feminists to Achieve Equality
Senator Loretta Weinberg,
Candidate Amy Kennedy (NJ02)
Candidate Stephanie Schmid (NJ04)
- 4:30 PM Looking ahead to November
Assembly Member Shavonda Sumter

SENATOR CORY BOOKER

believes that the American dream isn't real for anyone unless it's within reach of everyone. He has dedicated his life to fighting for those who have been left out, left behind, or left without a voice.

As New Jersey's junior Senator, Cory Booker has emerged as a national leader in the effort to fix our broken criminal justice system and end mass incarceration, helping craft the most sweeping set of criminal justice reforms in a generation, the First Step Act, which became law in



December 2018. He has advocated for economic policy that expands opportunity, increases wages, limits corporate concentration, and cracks down on corporate practices like outsourcing, stock buybacks, and no-poach agreements that firms use to keep wages down. And he has been a leader in the fight to protect the ACA, while also championing proposals to build upon the law, increase access to care, and lower costs.

Cory Booker served as Newark mayor from 2006 until 2013. He still lives in Newark's Central Ward today, where he sees first-hand many of the challenges he's working to solve in Congress, such as lack of access to affordable health care, environmental injustice, food insecurity, and our broken criminal justice system.

SENATOR LORETTA WEINBERG

was elected to the New Jersey State Senate (District 37) in November 2005. She is currently the Senate Majority Leader and serves on the Senate Judiciary Committee. She is Vice Chair of the Legislative Oversight Committee and Co-Chair of the Select Legislative Committee. She also sits on the NJ Israel Commission, NJ Historical Commission and State Legislative Services Commission.



Prior to joining the State Senate, she served in the New Jersey General Assembly for 14 years. In 2004, Senator Weinberg's .08 legislation, which lowers the legal alcohol level to .08 in New Jersey, was signed into law. She sponsored the NJ Smoke-Free Air Act, which prohibits smoking in indoor public places and workplaces. She has also sponsored legislation that required health insurance companies to pay for at least 48 hours of hospital care for new mothers; created the Governor's Advisory Council on Adolescent Pregnancy; and shaped a landmark autism research funding bill. She has been the lead on every LGBT advancement in NJ including marriage equality, transgender equality and anti-discrimination and anti-hate crime laws. In April 2018, she worked on with Senator Diane Allen to amend the NJ Law Against Discrimination to provide enhanced equal pay protections for NJ Employees. Senator Weinberg is a proud member of the Northern New Jersey chapter of NOW.

DR. KHYATI Y. JOSHI

is a professor of education at Fairleigh Dickinson University. She is the author and co-editor of many publications including: *New Roots in America's Sacred Ground: Religion, Race, and Ethnicity in Indian America*; *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*; *Asian Americans In Dixie: Race and Migration in the South*; *Understanding Religious Oppression* and *White Christian Privilege*; and authored numerous book chapters and articles on race, immigration, and religion.

In addition to numerous presentations to U.S. academic conferences, Dr. Joshi has been invited to present her research on Hindu communities at the White House; to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to Vienna, Austria, where she addressed the racialization of religion, particularly



Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam, as it relates to the development of policies to prevent and combat hate crimes in the OSCE region; and at several conferences in India, including an international conference of scholars on the Indian Diaspora sponsored by the Government of India. She was a consultant for the Pew Research Forum's groundbreaking survey on Asian Americans and Religion.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER SHAVONDA SUMTER

has served in the executive leadership as Deputy Speaker and Majority Conference Leader of the New Jersey General Assembly. She currently represents the 35th Legislative District that includes parts of Bergen and Passaic County.

In this current session, Assembly Member Sumter serves as chair of a new Assembly Committee, Community Development and Affairs, where she looks forward to tackling important issues such as community blight, the wealth gap and upscaling the needs of New Jersey's small businesses. She is also a member of the Labor and Law & Public Safety committees.

Assembly Member Sumter is a staunch advocate for job growth, women's health, voting rights, civil rights, and criminal justice reform. She has championed legislation addressing Black maternal and infant mortality in the state and recently, the Governor signed her legislation into law that will restore voting rights for more than 80K individuals who are currently on probation or parole.



Assembly Member Sumter received her Master's in Business Administration from the Fairleigh Dickinson University Silberman College of Business and attended Kean University for her undergraduate degree in Political Science.

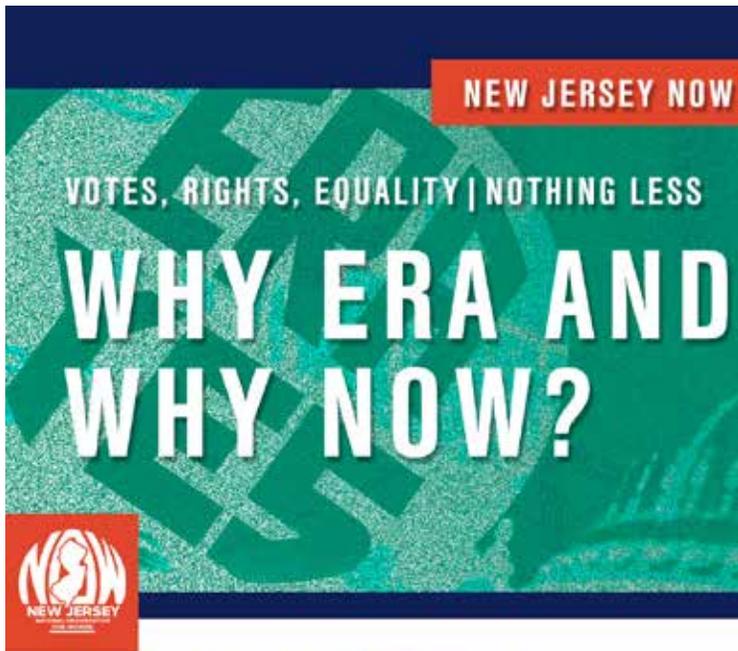
health care.



DEMOCRATIC
ORGANIZATION

Chair Amy DeGise

Campaigning today
for a better tomorrow!



TUESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER, 7:00PM

09 Why ERA and WHY NOW?

15
20

After a gap of 40 years, there is renewed momentum around the ERA. Nevada led the surge, Illinois stepped up and in January 2020, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. An inter-generational panel leading the fight to have the gender equality enshrined in the the U.S. constitution, discusses why we still need the ERA and where we go from here.

Lexi Abrams Generation Ratify

Jan Erickson National Organization for Women (NOW)

Alice Cohan Feminist Majority Foundation

Linda Weber New Jersey NOW

60 min.



THURSDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER, 7:00PM

09 Title IX Under Assault

17
20

When the Obama administration recognized that Sexual Assault infringed on Title IX protections, it brought sweeping changes to the handling of these cases on campuses. Under the current administration, many of those advances have been rolled back or weakened. Join us to hear from activists and others on the ground in New Jersey on what these changes could mean for survivors.

Jerin Arifa Title IX Activist while Undocumented

Emily Ralph: Former Title IX Administrator

Penny Venetis Rutgers Law School

Anjali Mehrotra New Jersey NOW

60 min.

More than just Pronouns

In a gender-binary world, those who don't identify as male or female often have trouble fitting in. In a world that asks us to check a single box — male or female — what happens for those who don't feel either answer is exactly right? Our panel examines what it's like to navigate the intersection between gender, identity and sexuality especially as we wait for societal norms and structures to catch up.

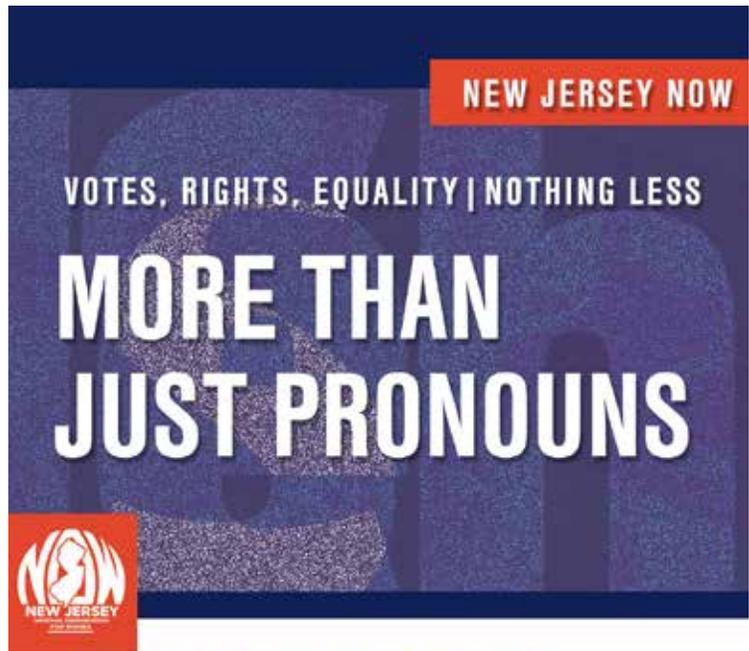
Dr. Catherine Lugg Rutgers Graduate School of Education

Erin Worrell Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice

Danni Newbury Office of LGBTQ Affairs at Union County

60 min.

09
21
20



MONDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER, 7:00PM

Racism is in the Air

Acute pollution sources placed in overburdened neighborhoods have led to decades of pollution experienced by large parts of Newark, Camden, and many other Garden State communities. They pose health hazards to nearby residents further exasperating health disparities for communities of color. Our panel of experts and activists will discuss the steps needed and the urgency for change.

Kim Gaddy Clean Water Action

Melissa Miles New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA)

Nicky Sheats Thomas Edison State University

Senator Troy Singleton New Jersey Senate (LD-07)

Shree Mehrotra New Jersey NOW

60 min.

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24
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THURSDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER, 7:00PM



TUESDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER, 7:00PM

09 Why ERA and WHY NOW?

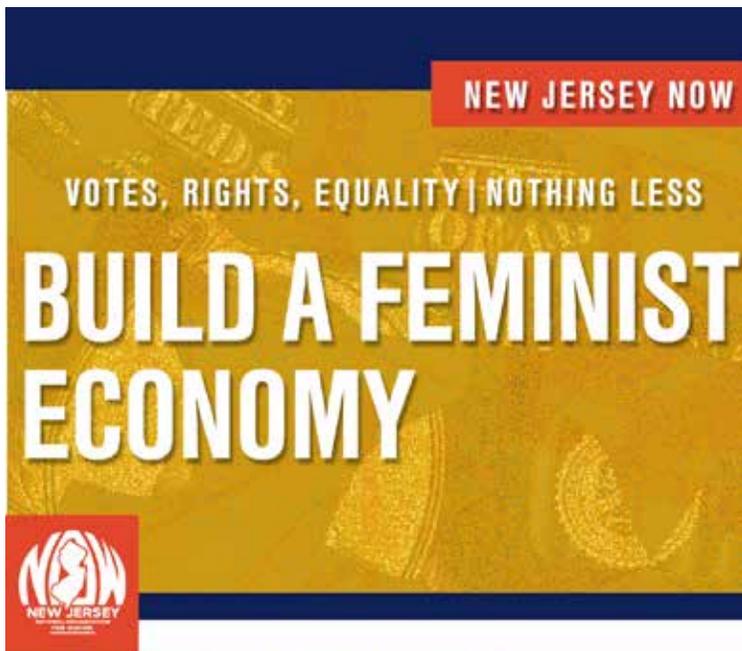
29
20 Menstrual Equity is about affordability, accessibility and safety of menstrual products. It is also about education and reproductive care. Our panel of service providers and advocates discusses why it's time to eliminate period poverty and poverty stigma that has prevented not only decision-makers, but also healthcare providers, educators and individuals from ensuring that menstrual health is a priority.

Elizabeth Coulter Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey

Elise Joy Girl Helping Girls Period

Jennifer Weiss-Wolf Author, Periods Gone Public
Annabelle Jin period.org

60 min.



THURSDAY, 1 OCTOBER, 7:00PM

10 Title IX Under Assault

01
20 The current pandemic has impacted women disproportionately across the globe. As states draw up recovery plans, some are asking the question – The current system is broken... Why not try something new? Our experts will discuss the merits of a gender responsive approach with investment in social infrastructure – childcare, education and health – rather than traditional infrastructure projects, in order to boost the economy.

Dr. Deborah Cornavaca Office of the Governor, New Jersey

Brandon McKoy New Jersey Policy Perspective (NJPP)

Dr. Yana Rodgers Center for Women and Work, Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations

Katie Brennan New Jersey NOW

60 min.



THE ESSEX COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE



CHAIRMAN LEROY J. JONES JR.



VICE CHAIR M. TERESA RUIZ

Essex County Democratic Committee, Inc.

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07052**

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New Jersey NOW Candidates



Anjali Mehrotra
President

Dream Big. Fight Hard.

Four words that embody my own life experience. Born and raised in India, from a young age I learned to speak up, challenge the status quo and fight for what is right. I had no choice if I wanted a college education or career. Moving to New Jersey, I faced challenges both as an immigrant and a woman of color. I continued to use my voice as a young professional, to call out unfair practices; and as a mother, to advocate for children.

After my daughters left for college, I followed my passion to see more women in elected office. After working on local, state, and federal campaigns, I became a candidate myself. During that election I learned that the position I was running for was listed as "Councilman" on the ballot. I worked to get the language changed to "Member of Council" in my county and had legislation introduced to ensure gender-neutral ballots statewide.

I am a strong leader with a proven record of service at multiple organizations. Before I became President, New Jersey NOW was largely on the sidelines of politics and policy in the state. Because of my leadership and persistence, NOW has regained a seat at the table of power and influence, as I have built relationships with legislators, the Governor's office and advocacy groups. We have called out the toxic culture that exists in NJ politics

President: Anjali Mehrotra

Administrative Vice President: Saily Avelenda

Action Vice President: Danni Newbury

Legislative Vice President: Linda Weber

Membership Vice President: Joseph Shelley

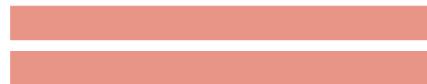
Communications Vice President: Isha Mehrotra

Treasurer: Katherine Brennan

Secretary: Ayisha Mapp

and the barriers it presents for women. We are currently working on bills to codify *Roe v Wade*, improve access to abortion care for all New Jerseyans and provide free menstrual products in public schools. I fought to change the bill's language from "feminine hygiene products" to "menstrual products" making it trans-inclusive.

Representation is important to me. If re-elected, I will continue to lift the voices of color in our organization. For too long we have been unable to attract persons of color and young feminists and I am working to grow our outreach by collaborating with organizations that cater to these groups. 2020 has presented many challenges; yet it is imperative that we keep our eyes on the prize and stay united in the fight for equality. Join me - I ask for your support.



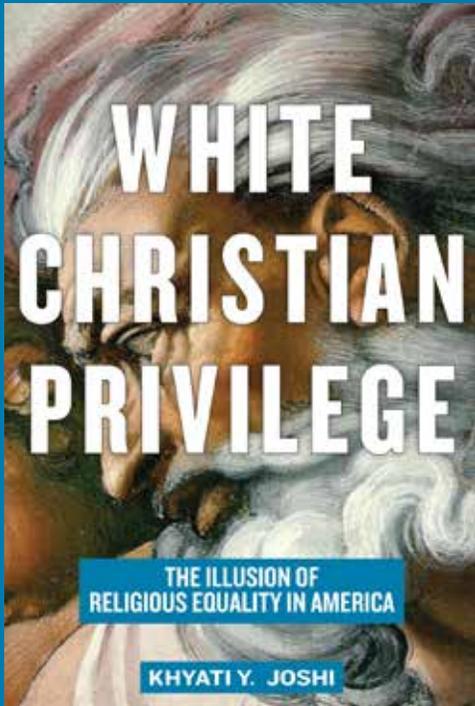
I was your typical, modern, suburban, New Jersey housewife, living my dream. Until May 2017, I practiced law for almost 20 years in the private sector. I was working as in-house counsel for a mid-size bank when a handwritten note at the bottom of a letter from Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen to a bank board member said a "ringleader" of a protest group worked there. The discomfort I experienced lead me to resign.



Saily Avelenda
Administrative Vice President

In 2018, I assumed a new role as Executive Director for NJ 11th for Change - a grassroots group that was instrumental in flipping the New Jersey's 11th Congressional District by electing Representative Mikie Sherrill.

Since February 2020, I have served as the Executive Director of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee. In this role, I helped launch a comprehensive workplace culture program to ensure that all of our employees and volunteers feel valued, empowered, and supported. We strive towards a system that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive at all levels of representation. I have been, remain, and will always be a fierce proponent of women's rights. Until women -- especially women of color -- receive the full benefits of our laws, we will never truly be equal to men.



Print, e-Book & Audiobook

THANK YOU, NATIONAL
ORGANIZATION FOR
WOMEN OF NEW JERSEY
FOR YOUR ALL OF
YOUR WORK!



It takes an understanding of Whiteness's role in US history and its collusion with Christianity in the construction of American identity for us to trace how laws, court decisions, public policies, and social movements perpetuate White Christian privilege.

KHYATI Y. JOSHI

SOCIAL JUSTICE • RACE • RELIGION



Linda Weber
Legislative Vice President

I have spent thirty years in the fields of financial services and technology, with expertise in risk management, Internet payments and other online technology deployed by Banks. I am currently Senior Vice President and founder of the Corporate Cash Management and online banking business at IDB Bank NY in New York City. My expertise is in starting and fixing businesses and departments. For the vast majority of my career, I have been a

In 2016, I uprooted my life and drove from Allentown, Pennsylvania to Orlando, Florida to work for Hillary Clinton. It was a transformative experience that provided me with my first real look at structured political engagement and volunteer leadership. After the 2016 election, like so many others, I was crushed that I was not celebrating the first Woman President but instead facing a presidency that represented the antithesis of everything I fought for in Central Florida.

Re-energized, I moved in early 2018 to Kalispell, Montana to work for Senator Jon Tester in the midterm elections. Working in rural Montana was a unique experience that gave me the opportunity to learn about issues that continue to motivate me: veteran's affairs, Indigenous tribal sovereignty, and women's health care in rural America. After our success in Montana, I moved to and settled in Ewing, New Jersey with my partner, Semira, a public school teacher.

Currently, I am the Director of Operations for the Union County Democratic Committee. I oversee data and logistics for countywide and municipal races across Union County. During the COVID-19 pandemic, my role has changed significantly, but the unique organizing experience has provided me a brand new skillset in digital and relational organi-

working mother.

I was previously a member of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Division of the American Cancer Society as VP for Board & Volunteer Development, and chair of the Division-leading Relay For Life event for five years, raising millions of dollars. For my service, I received the American Cancer Society St. George Award, one of the highest honors given by the Society.

I ran for the US House of Representatives, NJ CD-7, in the 2018 election cycle, and for local council in 2010. As the current Legislative Vice President, I work closely with the President on our legislative priorities and started the first database of New Jersey legislation related to the six pillars of NOW.



Joseph Shelley
Membership Vice President

zing. With my background as a organizer in urban, suburban, and rural communities, I believe I can engage a diverse, intersectional recruitment strategy that will amplify women's voices and promote a bold, feminist platform across New Jersey. In addition to recruiting more people to join and support our movement I hope to be an active participant among the incredible women that lead this organization. I look forward to earning your support and working to expand our membership across the state. Equity is essential and nothing less will do. This is a time for all hands on deck.



Isha Mehrotra
Communications Vice President

For New Jersey NOW's HERStory project, I had the privilege of interviewing Ms. Maretta Short, the first African American president of the State Chapter. As I learned about her life's journey in activism, I was inspired to run for a State board position. I have always considered myself a feminist. At the University of Chicago, I was involved in multiple efforts to increase gender parity in tech and support women on campus and joined NOW in 2017 when the Union County chapter was reinstated.

After graduating last year with a degree in Computer Science, I began working at Google NYC. Since then, I have been able to increase my involvement in NOW working on different initiatives. I helped write two press releases, including one calling on our assembly to vote for the recently passed environmental justice bill. I look forward to engaging with NOW's issues on a larger scale through legislation. Pay equity, workplace harassment, racial equity, and inclusion for all people are issues my generation cares deeply about. We need more young women, especially of color, to get involved with NOW. If elected, I will conduct outreach towards underrepresented populations.

My technology background makes the Communications VP position a natural fit for me. I have experience creating websites, conducting social media outreach, and organizing comms as leader of UChicago's Women in CS chapter. This year I helped with the redesign of the NOW-NJ website and sending email blasts for the conference. I also helped with social media for the webinars and running the live stream for the events. As Communications VP, I am excited to develop new content to increase engagement on social media as well as leverage my technology skills to better organize our comms.

Candidates

Courage allows the successful woman to fail and learn lessons from that failure, so that in the end she never failed.

- Maya Angelou



Katherine Brennan
Treasurer

In my first year as Treasurer I modernized our record keeping mechanisms, ensuring both more seamless records and reducing costs. I served as an active member of the board assisting in new programming activities, helping to amplify NOW's reach with a wider range of stakeholders and younger members. In my second year as Treasurer, I plan to continue the fiscal organization and revenue growth. Additionally, I will work to increase our active membership and pre-

For nearly two decades, I have been an active civic leader, serving various roles including as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer for foster youth, a commissioner on the Union County Human Relations Commission, and as Chair of the Union County LGBTQ Democratic Caucus. In 2018, I led the development and administration of the first county government LGBTQ office in New Jersey. I have been recognized by *USA Today* and *The Advocate* magazine for my leadership in efforts to advance the civil rights and equality of the LGBTQ community in New Jersey. In 2018, I was instrumental in moving a confirmatory adoption bill through the state legislature to streamline the legal process that establishes parental rights in a married couple, where one parent is not able to contribute genetic material or gestate the child. This became law in April, 2020.

I have served as the technical director of the performing arts department at Kent Place School in Summit for the past se-

sence throughout the state. This, in turn, will generate additional funds. I envision a NOW with engaged members, diverse in race, age, gender, and identity, advancing women's equity together in New Jersey.

I am currently the chief of staff at the New Jersey. Most recently, this work has centered on addressing health equity through housing and community development; including the first-in-the-nation state-wide hospital and housing partnership. Prior to my current role, I served as the Program Director of Affordable Housing for the County of Hudson. In this capacity, I directed affordable housing production, foreclosure prevention, fair housing, and lead-based paint hazard programs.

I have also served on Governor Murphy's Economic Working Group and as the Deputy Policy Director for the Housing Transition Committee. I am honored to currently serve on the boards of The Waterfront Project, New Leaders Council New Jersey, and the Van Vorst Park Neighborhood Association.



Danni Newbury
Action Vice President

venteen years, and continue to support young women using the arts to tell stories on stage through lighting and stage design and construction. In addition, since October 2019, I have served as Rahway's Fifth Ward Councilperson and am running for election to the same position this November.

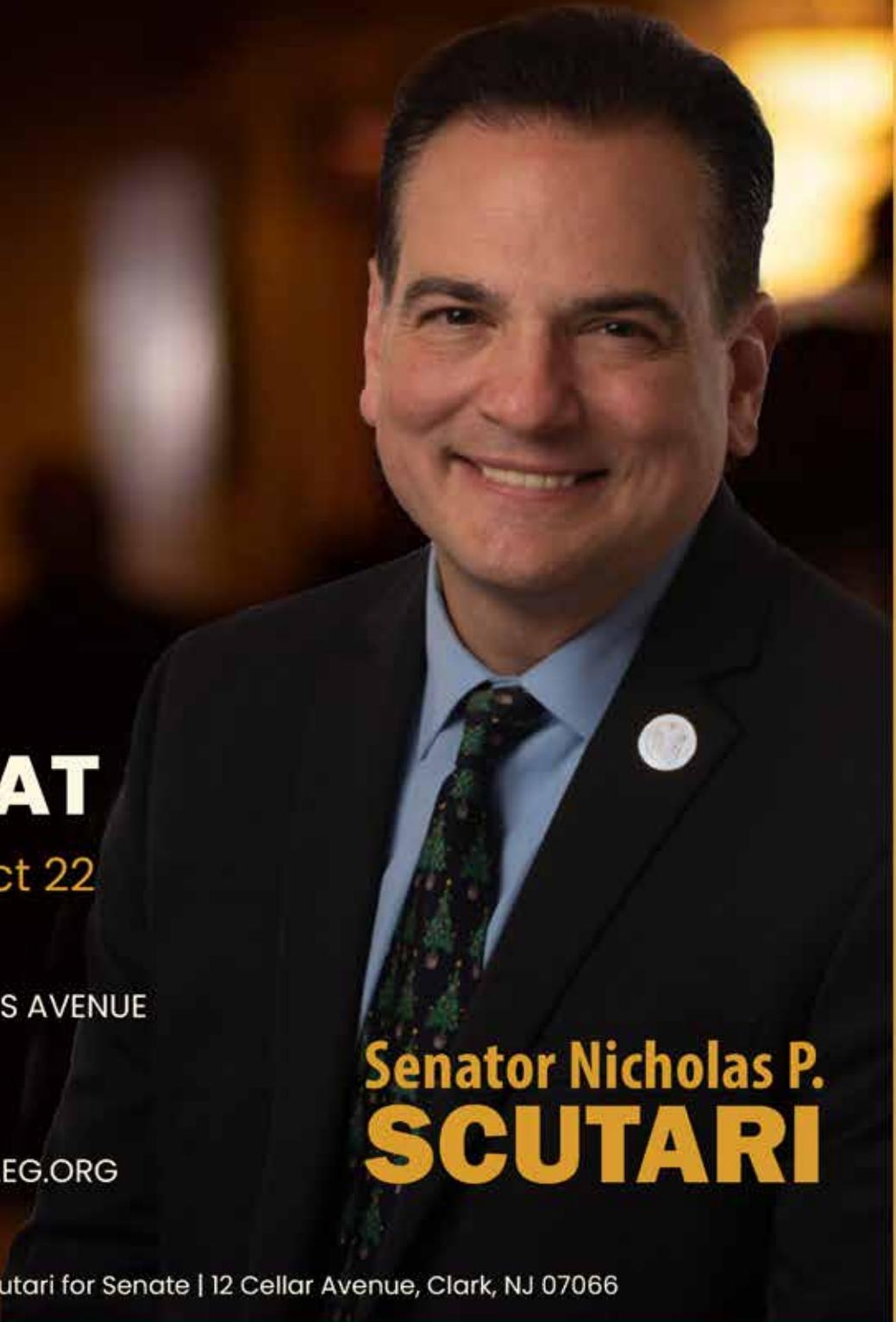
My overlapping background in nonprofit management and government relations brings diverse strategies to support economic development, impact social change, and increase community engagement.



Ayisha Mapp
Secretary

I am a proud and lifelong resident of Plainfield, New Jersey and Executive Director of Plainfield NOW, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization devoted to addressing social, economic, and educational inequalities in Plainfield and the surrounding areas. My passion in life is to make sure youth have equal access to the global economy because too often, programs are implemented after a critical age, to fill a perceived educational gap. My favorite quote is by Maya Angelou and reads: "Courage allows the successful woman to fail and learn lessons from that failure, so that in the end she never failed." I attended Howard University in Washington, DC where I studied Political Science and African American Studies; I also attended the Public Purchasing program offered by Rutgers University. I am also currently the Purchasing Assistant for the County of Union in addition to the Deputy Chief of Staff to New Jersey Assemblywoman Linda S. Carter.

I am the proud aunt of Mawuli and Yayra, who I spend as much of my free time with as possible. I have a passion to see the City of Plainfield and surrounding communities flourish, which is evidenced through my non-profit work. I belong to the Plainfield Democratic City Committee, where I hold office as treasurer and the Plainfield Grassroots CDC, where I taught SAT Prep.



Good leadership in government is necessary, now more than ever. I'm proud to fight for all of New Jersey's working families and diverse, unique communities.

DEMOCRAT

Legislative District 22

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**Senator Nicholas P.
SCUTARI**

MIKIE
SHERRILL
★
U.S. CONGRESS

THANK YOU
NEW JERSEY
NOW



AND BEST WISHES FOR YOUR
2020 STATE CONFERENCE



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@MikieSherrill



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8.26.84 NEW JERSEY GAY PRIDE



1978 ERA MARCH WASHINGTON DC



UNION COUNTY NOW ON ATLANTIC CITY BOARDWALK

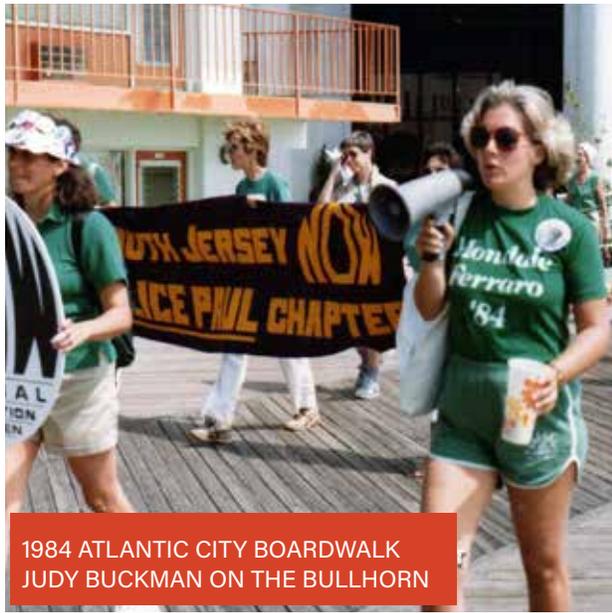


NEW JERSEY 1978 ERA MARCH



1978 ERA MARCH WASHINGTON DC

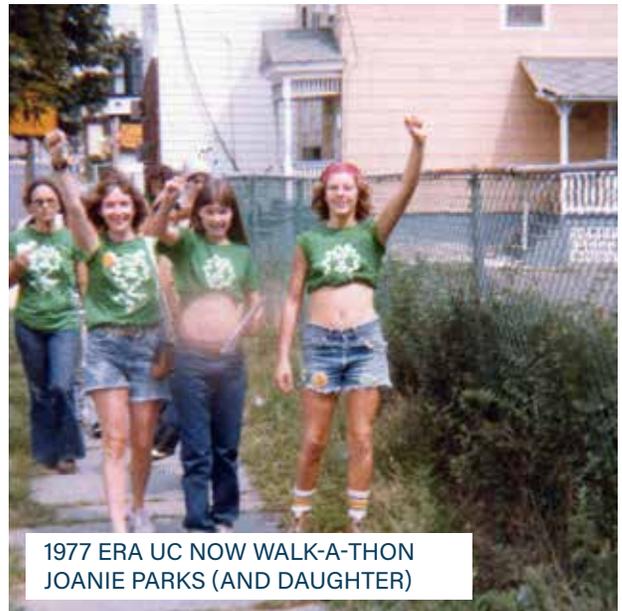
1977 ERA UC NOW WALK-A-THON
JOANIE PARKS



1984 ATLANTIC CITY BOARDWALK
JUDY BUCKMAN ON THE BULLHORN



1996 NEW JERSEY PRIDE
ASBURY PARK



1977 ERA UC NOW WALK-A-THON
JOANIE PARKS (AND DAUGHTER)



1984 LESBIAN RIGHTS



1996 NEW JERSEY PRIDE
ASBURY PARK

IN HER OWN WORDS

I was born in New York and my family moved thirteen times before we finally settled during my fifth grade. I went to Phillips Exeter Academy my junior and senior year. I was at Exeter in the first five years that they allowed female students. There were very few women faculty and sometimes I would be the only girl in a class. And they would ask me: "Why don't you give us the women's perspective?" As if at age 16, I could speak for all women. Or an alumni would come and say something along the lines of "I hope my education still means something that there are girls here now."

What brought you into politics and organizing?

My experience at Exeter brought me to wanting to organize around women's issues and then it was seeing women's voices not being heard in the nuclear movement that made me look for a different place to be an activist. And that's how I found NOW. I was only seventeen when I joined in 1977. I remember waiting every month for the paper newsletter to come from the National office because it was like I have to read every word of it. I marched for the ERA in New Hampshire and was very interested in abortion rights. My criminal law class at Catholic University of America taught us that abortion was a criminal offense even though it was legal all over the US at that point. There were a lot of sexist undertones that had to do with the Catholic doctrine at the school. I really didn't understand what that would be like until I went there. At the end of my first year in law school, I found out that I was in the top 10% of my class. One of the deans, a priest, saw me right after I found out and I was really excited about it, and he said "I hate it when women are in the top 10%. You're just gonna get married and have babies and take the top 10% jobs away from us." I mean I was just like "Seriously? Are you telling me it's bad that I'm in the top 10%?" The 70s and 80s were a time of incredible transition and I feel very lucky that I was there to see it and on the other hand wish I hadn't had to be on the forefront of it.



Bear Atwood

ZHAMILYA BILYALOVA

The 70s and 80s were a time of incredible transition and I feel very lucky that I was there to see it; on the other hand wish I hadn't had to be on the forefront of it.

After that, I moved to a rural part of New Hampshire to work in the public defender program. There were two male attorneys and a woman secretary who told me on my first day: "Don't expect me to like you. I told them not to hire a girl." It was a really tough first year - the male attorneys basically wouldn't speak to me, the judges were condescending and the prosecutors called me "honey." I stayed for eight years and by the time I left I was the managing attorney in the office and had hired other women attorneys.

I helped found a chapter in the region because I needed to have a women-centered space. I had a baby and everyone assumed I wouldn't come back to work. I stayed home for eight weeks and then came back. (*smiling*) I kept hitting walls in society that became my inspiration to stay involved in the women's movement. NOW was much more cutting-edge then and I tend to be pretty radical. I liked NOW because it wasn't focused on a single issue and from the early days, they saw racism as a feminist issue. Most of the women shelters that exist and have existed for a long time were started by NOW members. They were on the forefront of making political change in very concrete ways.

Was there an area you wanted to work in?

I wanted to focus my practice on helping low-income people. Lawyers can make change two ways: by representing individual people, which I did as a public defender, or by impact litigation, which involve cases that may make a bad law unconstitutional or will in some way affect a wide range of people. I did that later in my career, both at the Southern Poverty Law Center where I worked on a juvenile justice project as the Executive Director and then as Legal Director at the American Civil Liberties Union in Mississippi.

I left New Hampshire in 1991 and moved to New Jersey and became much more active in NOW. I became chapter president and then Action Vice President for NOW under Myra Terry and then became State President for NOW in New Jersey. I was very lucky to be a full time president and be able to devote all of my time into that. That was the most amazing job I've ever had.

Have you worked on any big cases related to women's issues?

When I was at Planned Parenthood, New Jersey had passed a parental notification law, a law saying that minors had to notify

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their parents before they could get an abortion which we didn't support and so I worked on the case that went to the New Jersey Supreme Court and overturned that law. I worked on a lot of legislation while I was at NOW in New Jersey.

During Bill Clinton's time in office, they passed really bad welfare bills that were draconian and very bad for women. They passed a law that said if you were already on welfare and you had another child, your welfare benefits wouldn't go up to cover that child. It was an interesting case, we brought it with a right to life group because their argument was that knowing that women wouldn't get additional benefits, it would incentivize women to have abortions. So we joined forces and it was very bizarre when we would all have to be in the same room. We would all sit as far away from each other as we could. (*said Bear laughing*)

Can you recall your proudest moment or achievement with NOW?

NOW has been a huge part of my life. NOW was very involved and I was very involved as a NOW person in getting marriage equality passed in New Jersey for lesbian and gay

people. I left right after that but I think that was probably my biggest, my proudest moment—NOW's involvement in that.

You asked me about what issues I'm currently focused on. And there's really two—one of them is a more internal NOW issue and its that I think NOW really needs to increase its diversity in membership and leadership. And externally I've been really involved in transgender issues the last five or six years and brought some cases while I was at the ACLU.

What advice do you have for the next generation of women?

I am going to give push back when you say you don't always see the deep-rooted sexism around you. You need to notice the discrimination that is happening around you. Not that much has changed. Girls are still told not to go into science and engineering. At Exeter my older sister was two classes ahead of me (so she was one of the first classes of girls) and taking this really advanced physics class. She was getting a C and the professor kept telling her to drop his class. At her 25th reunion she was talking about it and found out that she had the

highest grade in the class!

My advice to young girls is to be willing to try new things, to be bold. Don't wait for anybody to hand you power. That isn't to say don't respect and listen to older feminists who have experience, but don't wait for them to pass the torch, jump up there and take charge.

NOW really had a profound impact on me because I learned a lot of the life skills that stood me well in my career. It's where my friends come from; most of my friends are NOW activists so it's just it's been a huge part of my life. (*She smiled as she recalled her life*)

Editor's Note: Bear Atwood's NOW story continues... Last month she became Vice President of the National Organization for Women. Congratulations Bear! We are proud to have one of our own in this National office!



For Judy Buckman, feminism has always been about creating a more equal and empowering future for the next generation. In fact, it was motherhood that originally drew her to the women's rights movement. As a teacher in the early '70s, Judy faced pressure to quit when she became visibly pregnant with her son. When she first approached civil rights lawyers, they stared at her blankly, unsure why she was there. Pregnancy discrimination was a new concept

fought for, young women see less of a need to get involved. When Judy first joined NOW, over half of the women did not work outside of the home and were able to donate time during the day. However, this number has dwindled as more women started working outside of the home. Now young women are often juggling a career, kids, and aging parents, leaving little time to volunteer. This has led to a generation gap with the new wave of feminists that have emerged. Judy has frequently felt invisible in discussions and found her opinions undervalued. When asked what advice she has for the next

of Women Voters initiative that encourages young women to become involved in the political process. The program has high school girls participating in a workshop where they work together to build a campaign. Throughout the day, they hear from female elected officials, learn how to get involved with campaigns, and end with presentations of their campaigns. Judy remarks, "They go from these scared young girls who don't want to be there, to empowered women that start thinking about running for office, that will think about running political campaigns, that will certainly never stay

Judith Buckman

SHREE MEHROTRA

I knew they were getting a non-feminist message in society and in school. I wanted them to have something that said - Yes, it's okay to cry.

to them; Congress did not amend the Civil Rights Act to include sex discrimination on the basis of pregnancy until several years later in 1978. Once Judy demonstrated that this was a form of sex discrimination, the lawyers agreed to take on her case, securing a court injunction that allowed her to remain in her position.

Soon after, Judy attended her first NOW meeting and resolved to raise her children as feminists. Judy explains, "I knew they were getting a non-feminist message in society and in school. I wanted them to have something that said - Yes, it's okay to cry. Yes, it's okay to have a doll. Yes, you don't have to be perfect at sports." She recalls being pregnant with her daughter at her first NOW Conference in 1974, breastfeeding at meetings, and eventually taking mother-daughter trips to conferences when she was in high school. Judy laughs, "She literally got feminism with mother's milk." Now as adults, both her kids have served as clinic escorts and support feminist political candidates. Still, she fears her daughter's generation is less active in the women's rights movement. Judy explains, "My biggest worry overall is that they don't know how to be social justice activists, and if *Roe v. Wade* was pulled out from under them, they wouldn't know how to get it back." Today, having grown up accustomed to the rights previous generations

generation of women, she candidly admits, "I don't think they would listen to any advice I have to give...they think they know it all. They work differently."

Though working differently is not necessarily a bad thing, it has made collaboration difficult. When she tried to start a consciousness raising group, they replied, "We have a Facebook group for that." Citing the experience as "the biggest positive influence" in her life, she wonders how Facebook can replace the feeling of sitting cross-legged in a group of women, sharing your innermost thoughts, and crying and laughing together?

To cater to young women who already see themselves as feminists, Judy is now considering modifying the concept. "We did it so that we could figure out: Were we feminists? And why? But maybe young women now are past that."

Despite this generational split, much of her work has been aimed at uplifting young women. As one of the founders of the Alice Paul Institute, she helped develop the Girls Leadership Center, a program that cultivates leadership in high school girls through focus groups and training. In these girls, Judy often sees herself. She reflects, "I was that girl that would join focus groups, that would join a club, but never be president of that club." Judy has also supported Running and Winning, a Burlington County League

home and not vote."

Much like these leadership programs for young girls, NOW gave Judy a sense of pride. It turned her - a shy person into a leader. She ponders, "I just wonder how different my life may have been in terms of career choices, in terms of marriage choices, if I had had a Girls Leadership Center to tell me - you are smart, you are capable, you are powerful."

Although Judy has received many awards like the Planned Parenthood Public Affairs Award, Outstanding Woman of Burlington County Award, and Alice Paul Equality Award, she professes, "I'm proudest of keeping my NOW chapter together, saving Paulsdale, starting the Girls' Leadership Center - providing girls with opportunities, unlike the childhood I had." She recognizes that kids need to be raised differently. Parents are still raising daughters to think they need a man to take care of them. But now through programs like the Girls Leadership Council and Running and Winning program, "Girls are combatting the Cinderella message, and they'll never go back."



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Alice Cohan

ANNABELLE JIN

...he told her that there were just some things in life that she could not change. Aghast, Alice resolved to spend her life advocating for societal reform.

Alice Cohan, a leading feminist from Ewing, New Jersey, has been a force to be reckoned with since the third grade. When her teacher was replaced with an inept substitute, Alice organized her classmates to demand that the principal hire a qualified teacher instead, even carrying a sign to his office. However, he told her that there were just some things in life that she could not change. Aghast, Alice resolved to spend her life advocating for societal reform.

She was molded by the tumultuous times she lived in, shaped by racism against Black people and discontent with the Vietnam War. Her first encounter with racism was in high school while she was running a 4-H club, where she taught cooking skills to preschool students in Trenton. Once, a boy hit his hand on the counter and started bleeding. At the hospital, he was forced to wait for admittance because he was Black, even though a white boy who had entered after him was admitted immediately. When his mother arrived, she took him to a public hospital, where he promptly received care. This terrible experience instilled in Alice the idea that fighting for one social issue means fighting for all of them.

During her time at American University and Rider University studying political science, Alice became involved in the peace movement. She believed in the nonviolent ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and became trained as an organizer. Her most memorable ex-

perience was the day before May Day in 1971, when thousands of people, camping on the Ellipse in Washington, D.C., were told to leave because they did not have a permit. There was one group of women who chanted, "The women of the world are picking up the guns," a sentiment that pained Alice greatly. As part of the liaison team between police and the anti-war demonstration, Alice picked up her bullhorn in an attempt to negotiate with them. However, police mistakenly thought she was an organizer, too and arrested her with the other women. In jail, Alice felt overwhelmed, locked up with the violent protesters. Eventually she asked to be moved to another jail cell that contained Quakers. This cemented her belief that the feminist movement had to be nonviolent.

Alice became involved in feminism when her friend invited her to join the National Women's Political Caucus, which was convened in 1971. Older women formed a caucus to put forth two candidates for election to the Steering Committee. To win against these candidates, the Prime of Life Feminists caucus, which was made up of women in their 30's and 40's, and Alice, who herself had formed a caucus for college-age feminists, made a deal to support each other's candidates. At the conference, a woman dressed in a blue polyester suit warned Alice that the Prime of Life Feminists caucus would go back on their promise. Seeing that the woman was in her thirties and therefore too old to join the youth caucus, Alice did not heed her advice. However, as the stranger had predicted, Alice was not elected. That woman turned out to be Eleanor Smeal, who went on to serve three terms as President of NOW and is current President of Feminist Majority Foundation and later Alice's mentor. Through Smeal, Alice became involved with NOW, becoming a field organizer for the

Equal Rights Amendment. She made her way across America, speaking with legislators and holding rallies to convince states to ratify the amendment. Her proudest accomplishment was directing the 2004 March for Women's Lives, which protested abortion restrictions and garnered over a million participants.

Alice has never ceased her tireless work in advancing the feminist movement, working as an advisor to the NOW Political Action Committee and as Political Director of the Feminist Majority. She is amazed at how much the women's movement has grown throughout her lifetime but notes that, in some ways, it has become a much harder, uphill struggle to accomplish its goals because the low-hanging fruit (i.e. voting) have been picked. Alice's advice for young feminists today is to never stop pushing but to have fun while doing so. The connections that you make through this movement will support and uplift you for life.



company. Alan was wearing a black shirt with pink writing that read: "This is what a feminist looks like." Skip was wearing a blue shirt with the Superman logo captioned: "I'm a nasty woman." I complimented them both on their shirts, even more motivated for the interview.



I heard so many amazing stories from Skip and Alan, but it would take too long to recount their numerous contributions to the women's rights movement. There is one story, however, that is so inspiring that I need to share it.

It was January of 1991. There was a pro-life group in Dobbs Ferry, New York that was planning to conduct a series of blockades against abortion clinics. This pro-life group wasn't your average pro-life group – they were much more radical. They believed that they should take any means necessary to stop abortions, including killing abortion doctors, clinic staff, or anyone else trying to facilitate an abortion. Skip, working with

or discuss her plans to undermine the group. Because this task was so incredibly dangerous, Skip took notes in her diary in character. She praised the speakers, talked about making friends, and expressed disgust at the idea of abortion. Reading the diary is fascinating; you can understand how important it was to Skip's safety for her to constantly be in character.

This is exactly what being brave is about. Risking your life for the greater good, taking a gamble to help others. But it is more than that – not only was Skip brave to undertake this task, but Alan was too. As someone who loved and cared for Skip, he supported her wholeheartedly, despite the enormous

Skip Drumm and Alan Gross

LEXI ABRAMS



Being a woman means being brave. Supporting a woman means being brave. In the women's rights movement and the fight for gender equality, bravery is essential.

I've never really considered myself to be brave. To me, bravery meant putting yourself on the line, facing danger head on and sacrificing your well-being. But after the privilege of interviewing Skip Drumm and Alan Gross, my perception of bravery, what it truly means, is starting to change. Skip and Alan were both pioneers in the women's rights movement in New Jersey during the '70s and '80s. They met in December of 1980 while working with NOW New Jersey, went on their first date in January of 1981, and have been together ever since.

When Skip and Alan came onto the call, I immediately knew I was going to enjoy their

NOW, decided to go undercover to infiltrate this extremely dangerous group. Each day of the conference, she would listen to their speakers and ride the bus with them to abortion clinics. Every night, she would secretly call her contact at NOW and relay the group's plans for the next day. Skip reflected, laughing, "What they couldn't understand was how it was that every morning, when they arrived at a clinic to blockade it, already [NOW] people were there." Skip said even though she was scared and worried about what they would do to her if they discovered who she was, she knew that she was making a huge impact.

Throughout this experience, Skip took notes in a diary, later formatted for online consumption. But it was not a diary documenting her undercover work; she didn't write down the names of all the participants

risks to her safety. He was worried for her every second that she was gone, but he was behind her, nonetheless.

Skip and Alan's many incredible stories underscore that bravery comes in many forms. But above all, bravery is about taking risks for a better future, whether you are putting yourself on the line or lending your support to others. Skip and Alan are brave, and I hope I can emulate that bravery in my own life.

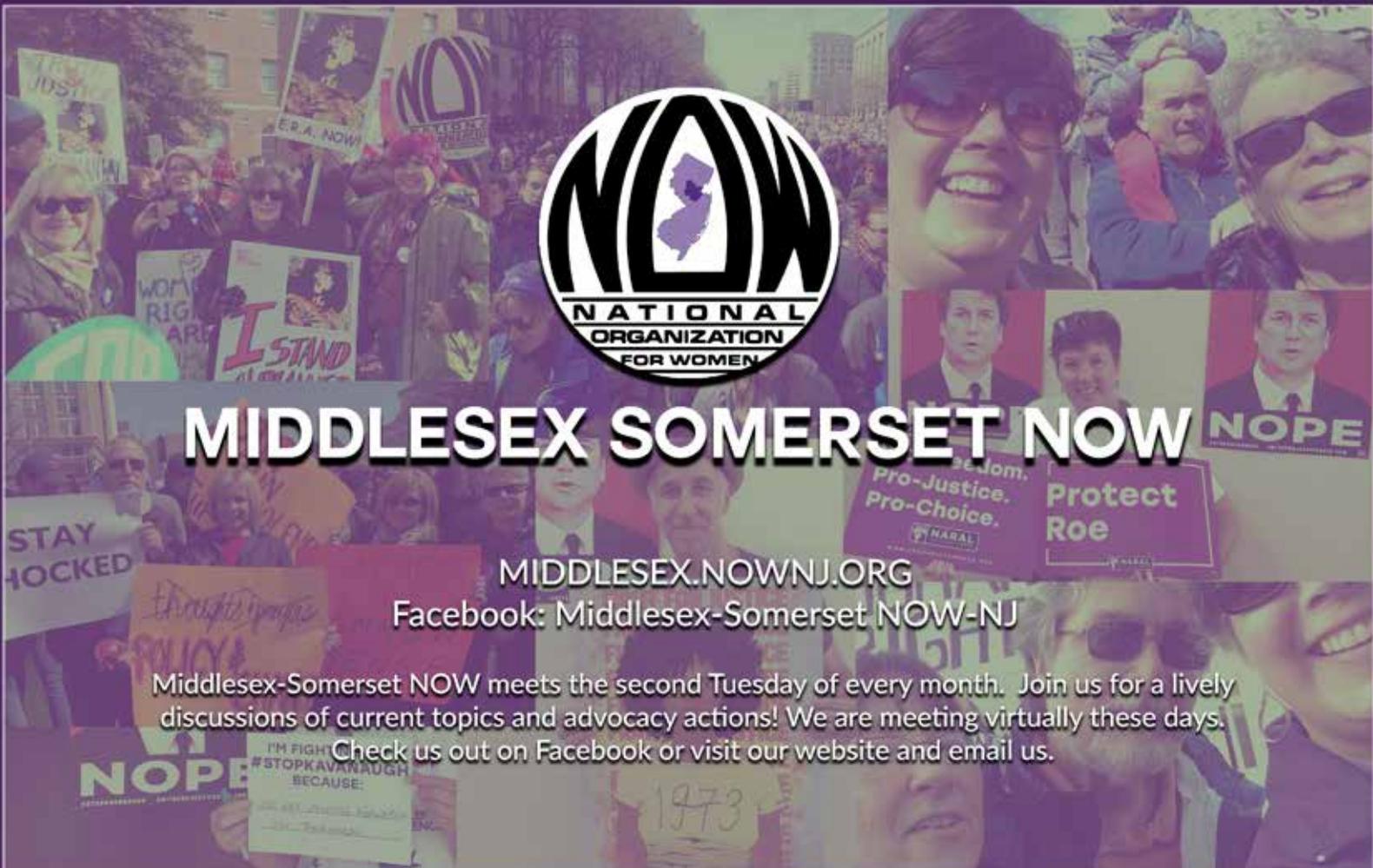


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For nearly 50 years Joanie Parks has championed women's rights with the National Organization for Women of New Jersey, working tirelessly to enact Title IX, ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and advance feminist goals. In the 1970s she began working as a typist for Jean Ambrose, then chair of the New Jersey NOW Education Task Force. She initially took on this role to keep up her typing skills while she was out of work and home with her children, but quickly became very interested and involved in the feminist movement. In 1975, she founded the Westfield Area NOW to provide a chapter for local feminists in her community. Joanie is proud that both women and men joined her initiative! This chapter later merged with Union County NOW, which is still active today. Over her decades of involvement in NOW, Joanie has held numerous leadership positions at both the local chapter and state levels. She served as the State Secretary for five administrations, with her last term ending in 2017.

To Joanie, being a NOW member is "the same as eating and breathing." She has regularly attended meetings, marches, and rallies both locally and in Washington, DC. She recounts that it is exhilarating to witness a sea of women and men uniting for equality. Additionally, Joanie considers NOW to be the one constant in her life. When asked what her children and grandchildren think of her involvement in the organization, she said that it is probably not something that they think about; they know that being active in NOW is just a part of who she is. One of Joanie's proudest accomplishments is helping to enact Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions. This was the first NOW initiative that she worked on. Working closely with Jean Ambrose, Joanie had a front-row seat to the creation of the bill. After Title IX was passed, she thought that NOW was unstoppable and was "just going to keep making strides." She believes that in a way they did, although it was not as fast as she would have liked. Joanie is also proud of her work for the ERA and its extension. She was very involved in this fight as she traveled with fellow New Jersey citizens to Vermont to help pass the ERA there in 1973. She recounts, "It felt good to help another state achieve something." When asked to compare the major focus areas of NOW today to when she joined the movement, Joanie said that sometimes it



Joanie Parks

KATIE ZIMMERMANN

She understands that the movement can sometimes be difficult, but encourages young women to "just keep putting one foot forward at a time."

feels like she is back where she was 30 years ago. She once was confident that abortion rights were secure, but now feels that their safety is questionable. However, her discussion of the fight for the ERA in the 1970s and today was more uplifting. She is excited that the push for the ERA has resumed and that the amendment is gaining momentum after a number of years of laying dormant. Today, Parks holds memberships in both Union County NOW and Ocean County NOW, where she serves as the Delegate to the State Board and votes on business on behalf of Ocean County. She explained that the main goal of Ocean County NOW is to encourage women to run for office. She insists that women must "take things

into our own hands" to ensure that women's needs are attended to in government. Joanie is very dedicated to electing more women and since 2016 has dedicated more time to working on local congressional races with the Democratic Club of Waretown. Joanie's advice for the next generation of feminists is that they demand rights instead of asking for them. She understands that the movement can sometimes be difficult, but encourages young women to "just keep putting one foot forward at a time." The young people currently fighting for equality inspire her. She is confident that they will pick up the mantle and attain what she and her fellow feminists have been trying to achieve for so long.



The first thing I noticed when I hopped onto a video call to interview Maretta Short were the balloons, flowers, and birthday cards dotting her windowsill. Not to be deterred by the pandemic, Maretta had just celebrated her 70th birthday via Zoom. The friends she has made along her long journey of activism in NOW had all joined to wish her and catch up.

Maretta's path to activism can hardly be considered traditional. Born in her grandmother's home in Lyons, Georgia in 1950, she moved to New Jersey with her mother and sister at the age of five after her parents separated. As a single Black parent, her mother worked hard to make ends meet, but soon remarried and moved the family to Newark, where Maretta would spend most of her childhood.

As a Black girl growing up in the '50s, Maretta said, "All my life I knew something was

One day, she wandered into the Women's Center at Ramapo College and noticed the book, *Our Bodies, Ourselves* lying on the table in the lounge. Having picked it up, she could not put it down. That started her journey into activism. She began to get more involved with the Women's Center, organizing events and joining campaigns. She served as Bella Abzug's bodyguard for a student-run event in the '80s and was a student coordinator for the Jesse Jackson for President campaign. Through her work on that campaign, she had the fortune of meeting Flo Kennedy and the opportunity to interview her for the student newspaper. She even attended Kennedy's famous Thanksgiving leftover potluck dinner in her Fifth Avenue apartment.

After speaking at a Rutgers Women's rally where she was interviewed by a television reporter, Maretta was approached by Fran Luck, the host of a feminist radio show on WBAI. Impressed by her interview, Fran invited her to co-host the radio show, the



All my life I knew something was wrong. I was not being treated fairly.

Maretta Short

ISHA MEHROTRA

wrong. I was not being treated fairly." She remembers a time soon after she moved to New Jersey, they were driving down South to visit her grandmother when she needed to stop at a restaurant to use the bathroom. When her mother inquired about whether her daughter could use the bathroom, the attendant replied that she couldn't use their bathroom - she'd have to go out back. It was dark outside and Maretta cried to her mother, scared. This was Maretta's first encounter with racism and segregation but it would not be her last.

While Maretta grew up surrounded by the stark realities of racism, it was not until she returned to college in her early 30s, that she realized all the inequities in her life were not just due to the fact that she was Black; they were compounded by the fact that she was a woman. As Maretta explained, "Racism is a very important issue. Some people don't see it as a women's issue, but it is. It always has been."

"Joy of Resistance" which Maretta did for several decades, interviewing icons like Angela Davis and Sweet Honey in the Rock. In 1989, Maretta joined NOW and attended the Women of Color and Allies (WOCA) conference. On her drive back with Barbara Foley, the two decided to found the WOCA Essex Chapter of NOW. From there, she began working on the combative racism taskforce and organized a counter-rally when the KKK marched through Morristown. She later served as the State VP of Affirmative Action and then became the first African American president of the State Chapter, New Jersey NOW in 2006.

Inspired by her own childhood and lived experiences, her biggest focus was on welfare reform as evidenced by her work on New Jersey's paid family leave legislation. Through the years, she has spoken at several events and protests on issues like pay equity, violence against women, and racial profiling. As Maretta proudly exclaimed, she's "a real rally woman."

Maretta's proudest moment came when she was honored by the National Council of Negro Women and received a commendation from New Jersey's State Legislature. She



said, "It felt like I was the prodigal woman who had come home." She had always seen herself as an outsider in such organizations, believing that upper class Black women chose not to affiliate with working class women like her.

When asked what she would tell the next generation of fighting feminists, Maretta had this advice for them, "Keep your eyes on the prize. Don't stop - you can give out but don't give up. You may get tired, sit down, and rest, but get back up. Keep trying and trying and trying until you reach your goal. That's what we all have to do."

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FOR 45 YEARS OF EFFECTING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR THE WOMEN OF
NEW JERSEY**

A special shout out to President Anjali Mehrotra for her hard work and her dedication to keeping New Jersey NOW in the spotlight. We wish you a successful State Conference and continued success in the fight for women's rights.

"I think in my former life I was a black lesbian."

Susan Waldman

VISHWA BHATT



When Susan Waldman said these words to me, she was laughing a little at her own joke. I, on the other hand, wondered if there was some merit to what she said. The 78-year-old straight, white woman fought for same-sex marriage decades before its legalization in 2015 and advocated for the goals of Black Lives Matter years before the movement began. To put it simply, she is a feminist.

Susan Waldman is a longtime member of the National Organization for Women, and she has the resume to prove it. Currently, she serves as Vice President of Fundraising for the Morris County Chapter of NOW, but she has held every position save for Treasurer during her time with the organization. Susan has also held positions at the state level, serving as Vice President of Administration, Task Force Review Chair, and a candidate interviewer for the Political Action Committee. And NOW is just a drop in the bucket of Susan's history of activism.

So how does one woman become such a prominent figure in creating change and advocating for a better future? By starting as a failed Chemistry major.

When Susan started college at the University of Toledo with no background in advocacy or interest in political and social reform, she planned to study chemistry. She hit a roadblock after transferring to Brandeis University and began struggling academically. "That first year there was very traumatic for me," she recalls. "My grandfather died right at the beginning of the year, and then I found out that the course I was taking, Organic Chemistry, was the hardest class at Brandeis." She eventually graduated college with a degree in English instead, which has proved to be particularly useful for her activism work.

Amongst her many accomplishments in writing, Susan has been published several times in local newspapers, starting with her first letter to the editor back in 1974. In 1997, she became an Opinion Shaper for the *Daily Record*, writing four feminist opinion columns, the first of which was called 'Boys will be Boys: We Shouldn't Let Them.' Even the *New York Times* featured a piece by Susan called 'One Woman's Odyssey.' Through the various positions she has held in activist organizations, Susan has been quoted in local papers too. Susan currently writes her chapter's monthly newsletter.

Susan has been an active member of many advocacy organizations, including the Democratic Party of Morristown, the Coalition Against Human Trafficking, the Human Relations Commission, and the Black and Latino Action Committee, just to name a few. She has been to protests as far as Washington, D.C., including a protest against a male-led religious group called the Promise Keepers, who argued vehemently against women's rights in the '90s.

Susan is particularly proud of testifying at hearings for meaningful issues such as equal marriage. She has received many awards for her work in the community, such as the Phenomenal Woman Award by the Neighborhood House and the Woman of Principal Award of Morristown.

When asked what initially prompted her to get involved with women's rights, Susan gave a very simple answer that nonetheless spoke volumes: abortion. "I had no reasons to make that my issue," she admitted, "...but I just felt really strongly that women should decide." Susan has spent the better part of a lifetime fighting for and protecting a

woman's right to choose. She is the mother of an adopted son herself, and she even recalls her own mother was once offered an abortion by her employer while pregnant with Susan.

At 78, Susan is still incredibly active in advocating for reproductive rights, civil rights, equal pay, and the Equal Rights Amendment. Most recently, she was offered an outreach position with the Coalition Against Human Trafficking, which would involve working with organizations such as the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security. Susan confesses it will be a stressful job, but she has a hard time saying no to these things. She and a fellow activist friend often joke about starting a Volunteers Anonymous group to cope with the mental toll that comes with undertaking such important work for the community.

All jokes aside, Susan admits that it can be depressing to focus on the state of the world and how much further work needs to be done. Still, she remains optimistic for the future, knowing how much we can accomplish together in the coming years due to the path she and countless other women have paved. To this day, Susan is a feminist, activist, and genuinely wonderful human being. She is an inspiration to us all.



Lexi Abrams is a senior this year at Millburn High School. After taking a women's studies class in school, she became more interested in the gender equality movement. With that, she joined Generation Ratify and is so thrilled to be a part of such an amazing organization! She is also the Membership Director for the New Jersey High School Democrats and is a campaign fellow for Tom Malinowski for Congress.

Jerin Arifa is a formerly undocumented activist impacting millions of lives. Jerin spearheaded the sexual harassment, assault, domestic violence and anti-stalking policy for the third largest university in the U.S. — while undocumented and poor. Jerin's NowThis video on how to be inclusive has gone viral with over 1,000,000 views.

It's not unexpected from a lifelong activist. As a child, Jerin co-created an anti-poverty program for homeless youth in Bangladesh. Now as a proud American citizen, she trains activists across the U.S. as the Founder of the National Organization for Women's (NOW) inaugural virtual chapter, Young Feminists and Allies. Skilled at coalition-building, she engineers safe spaces for marginalized groups, including sold-out events for LGBTQAI+ Muslims and their interfaith allies.

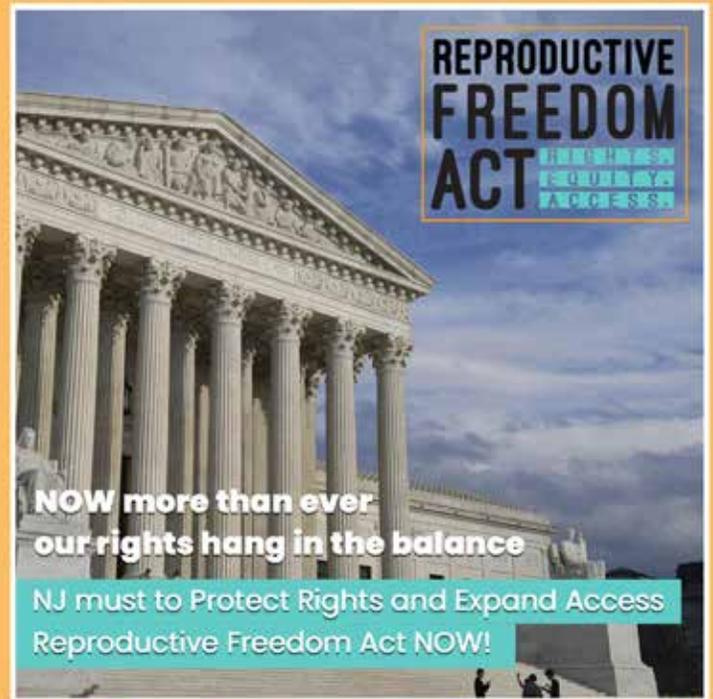
Katie Brennan
See *InterSectional - Candidates*.

Dr. Deborah Cornavaca serves as Governor Phil Murphy's Deputy Chief of Staff for Outreach. Her work focuses on the Governor's priority to have close connectivity to the people we serve so that decision making at the highest levels of government is informed by their experience and expertise. She, along with her team (4 of the 5 of whom are women), work extensively

with advocacy organizations, constituent groups, grassroots organizations and labor. Deborah is vocal and active in challenging the deeply male dominated world of politics — bringing more women into positions of power and evaluating the structures which serve to entrench patriarchy. Deborah has her B.A. from Dartmouth College, and holds a Masters and Ph.D. from UCLA in anthropological archaeology, where she was a Fulbright and National Science Foundation scholar. Deborah is the president of the Board of Trustees of the East Brunswick Public Library, where she has served as a Trustee for ten years. She lives in East Brunswick with her husband Ervin, and three children (all home now because of COVID).

Elizabeth Coulter is a strong advocate for women and girls and has dedicated her career to advancing gender equity through healthcare and education in government, electoral politics, and public policy. She currently serves as the Director of Public Health at Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey and has previously held positions at the New Jersey Department of Health, statewide political campaigns, and for Members of Congress. Elizabeth is pursuing a Master's in Public Administration (from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), and holds a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University, where she majored in International Politics.

Jan Erickson is currently Government Relations Director at the National Action Center, National Organization for Women and is Director of Programs for NOW Foundation. She has been with NOW since 1996. Additional NOW experience includes



This legislation sends a clear message: New Jersey stands for freedom, compassion, and healthy communities. The Reproductive Freedom Act ensures that everyone in this state can make their own personal medical decisions with dignity.

Let's pass the Reproductive Freedom Act to protect and expand access to reproductive health care in New Jersey.



serving as State President for NOW and as PAC chair in Alaska in the mid-1980s. Prior to that she was a Legislative Aide in the U.S. Senate helping to pass a trans-Alaska oil pipeline authorization bill, Senior Staff member in the Alaska State Senate, representative for the State on an intergovernmental study of the National Petroleum Reserve and Policy Analyst for the Alaska Legislative Research Agency. Jan has also staffed and consulted with more than two dozen local and state election campaigns. In her early career Jan worked for three metropolitan daily newspapers as feature writer and section editor.

Kim Gaddy is the Environmental Justice Organizer for Clean Water Action of New Jersey. She has been advocating for communities impacted by industrial pollution and the goods movement system in Newark and across the country for 19 years.

She is a former Newark School Board Member, New York/New Jersey Regional Representative for the Moving Forward Network, appointed by Governor Murphy to serve as Vice-Chair of the NJDEP Environmental Justice Advisory Council, former Chair of both the Newark Environmental Commission and the Essex County Environmental Commission, founding member of the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance and the South Ward Environmental Alliance. Previously, she worked in Municipal government in Newark for twelve years and served as the Chief of Staff for Councilwoman Mildred Crump. Kim was recognized for her community service in the 2018 Newark Women from Suffragettes to the Statehouse, selected as 100 People of Newark and a 2007 recipient of the Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 Environmental Community award.

Annabelle Jin is a high school senior from Moorestown, NJ, where she started a chapter of the youth-run non-profit Period., Inc. in December 2018. Since then, the chapter has donated over 12,000 pads and tampons to homeless shelters in the community. In October 2019, she was one of the lead organizers for the New Jersey National Period Day rally, where youth activists called for free period products in New Jersey public school bathrooms. Annabelle is a member of National Period's Youth Advisory Council, and currently serves as a co-administrator of the Equality, Period. NJ coalition, a group of organizations focused on passing period policy legislation in the state.

Elise Joy is the Executive Director of Girls Helping Girls. Period. and a co-founder, along with her daughters, Emma and Quinn. Elise spent more than 20 years as a television news and documentary producer with expertise in legal and criminal justice, as well as a range of social

issues. She began her career in New York as the producer of the six o'clock news at WNBC. She spent the last decade as a senior producer and director of development for MSNBC Documentaries and is responsible for overseeing more than 400 hours of longform programming. The program for which she is best known is the longest running prison documentary program on television, Lockup.

Elise and her family did not start out to create a non-profit... they were simply reacting to something they had learned: that women and girls in their own community were missing work and school, unable to afford basic menstrual products that are not covered by any state or federal subsidy program. They turned their project into a nationally recognized non-profit in 2017 when they found the need was overwhelming. Elise now serves as executive director and oversees fundraising, marketing, distribution and every other little thing. To date they have distributed more than 900,000 menstrual supplies.

Catherine A. Lugg, Ph.D. is a Professor of Education at the Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University. Her research focuses on the history and politics of education, especially involving social movements. The author of three books and over 100 research articles and book chapters, Dr. Lugg has received numerous awards for her research including the William J. Davis award (from Educational Administration Quarterly, with Autumn Tooms and Ira Bogtoch); the AERA Queer Special Interest Group's Significant Body of Work award, and the GSE Alumni Association's Award for Outstanding Faculty Research. She also received the Jay D. Scribner for outstanding mentoring of minority junior faculty into the professoriate. Finally, she received the McNair and UCEA awards for outstanding service to both the McNair undergraduate talent program and the University Council for Educational Administration.

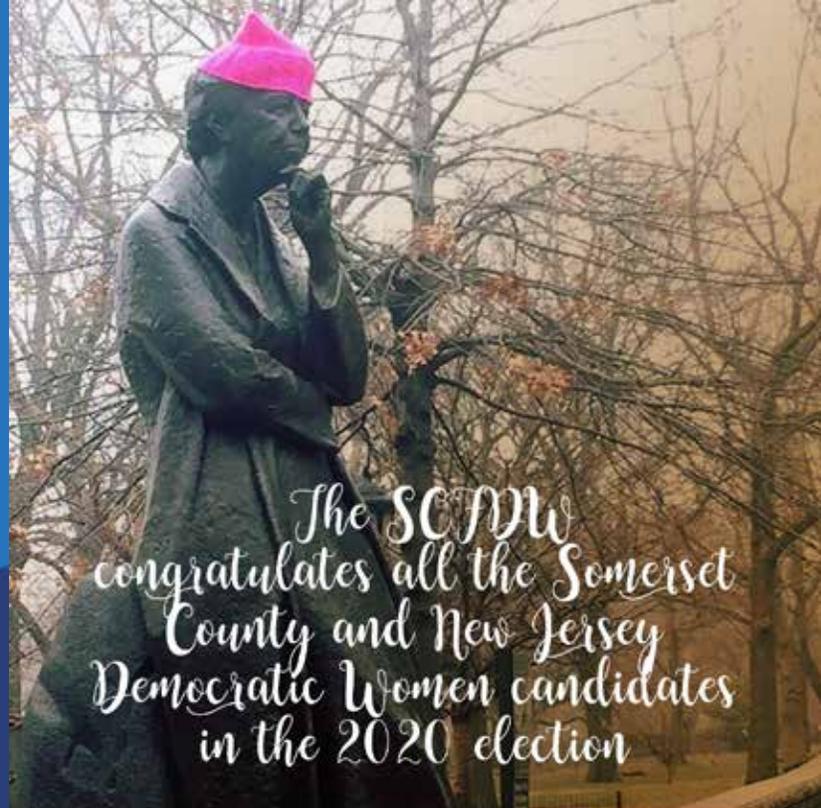
Brandon McKoy, President, is the chief executive of New Jersey

Policy Perspective (NJPP) and leads the organization's efforts in shaping policy debates to advance economic justice for the many, not a chosen few. Prior to being named President of NJPP in February 2019, Brandon served as NJPP's Director of Government and Public Affairs, where he designed and implemented the organization's outreach, advocacy, and government relations activities. He also produces timely, credible and accessible research and analysis on issues including, but not limited to, economic security, the social safety net and economic opportunity. Brandon's research interests include: state tax policy, the minimum wage, paid sick leave, the earned income tax credit, urban planning and criminal justice. He received a MA in City & Regional Planning and Policy Development from Rutgers University's Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy and holds a BS degree in Social Psychology from The College of New Jersey.

We are an organization dedicated to supporting women in politics and women's issues in Ocean County, New Jersey.

To join our Caucus, see the link below... oceancountydems.org/womens_caucus

Ocean County Democratic Women's Caucus



The SCFDW congratulates all the Somerset County and New Jersey Democratic Women candidates in the 2020 election



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We now have a web site! www.scfdw.org

Anjali Mehrotra

See *InterSectional - Candidates*.

Shree Mehrotra

recently graduated from the University of Chicago as part of the Class of 2020, with a major in Environmental Science and a minor in Human Rights. At UChicago, she chose to examine the intersection of these two issues through her senior thesis research, which explored the connection between climate and gender violence in India. On campus, she also advocated for environmental justice outside of the classroom as a Project Leader for Phoenix Sustainability Initiative, an environmental student organization. As a recipient of a Boren Scholarship, an award from the Department of Defense for critical language study, Shree spent the last year studying Hindi in Jaipur, India. This summer she began working as a civil rights paralegal for the Department of Justice, supporting cases that promote the integration of people with disabilities into the community. Shree plans to attend law school in a couple years, with the hope of becoming an environmental justice and women's rights advocate.

Melissa Miles

is the Executive Director for New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA), the only statewide organization whose mission is focused on environmental justice. Before this, Melissa was the Environmental Justice Manager at the Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC), a 50 year old service and advocacy organization located in the East Ward of Newark, NJ. She has her M.A. in Anthropology from the New School for Social Research and has spent considerable time in Brazil which inspired her to make her home in the largely Portuguese speaking Ironbound neighborhood of Newark. After her then one-year old son was diagnosed with asthma in 2013, she discovered that air pollution was linked to many cases of childhood asthma in the city. Following this toxic

trail she learned of the legacy of environmental injustice in the Ironbound which ultimately led her into activism. That activism was a precursor to her becoming a community-based organizer with the ICC. Her focus is on mitigating air pollution related to the transportation, energy and waste infrastructure concentrated in the City of Newark. In addition to engaging Ironbound residents in creating a more just community from the ground up, she works on issues related to Climate Justice, Energy Democracy and Just Transition in collaboration with local, national and international partner organizations. Melissa sits on the Environmental Justice Council to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection as the Vice-Chair of the Air Committee.

Danni Newbury

See *InterSectional - Candidates*.

Emily Ralph

is currently a senior Employee Relations Partner at Tesla in Investigations. She responds to complaints of discrimination in the workplace in this role. Previously Ralph has served as an Investigator of Discrimination and Sex-Based Misconduct at The New School. She supported campus Title IX efforts by investigating alleged violations of the university's sexual misconduct policy, writing reports, and coordinating the provision of resources and support services for individuals involved. Prior to her work at The New School, Emily served as the Title IX/EEO/AA Officer at Drew University, where she focused on educating the campus community on EEO laws and Title IX policies in an effort to foster an understanding of and compliance with applicable federal and state laws and campus policies. She also has served as the Deputy Title IX Coordinator at Morgan State University in Baltimore, as well as the Title IV-E Coordinator and Director of Texas A&M University-Kingsville School of Social Work.

Dr. Nicky Sheats, Esq.

is the director of the Center for the Urban Environment of the John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy at Thomas Edison State University and has defined the primary mission of the Center as providing support for the environmental justice (EJ) community. Among the issues he works on are air pollution, climate change, cumulative impacts, developing EJ legal strategies and increasing the working capacity of the EJ community. Sheats is a founding member of the NJ EJ Alliance, EJ Leadership Forum, EJ and Science Initiative and an informal NE EJ Attorneys Group. He has been appointed to the NJ Clean Air Council, EPA's Clean Air Act Advisory Committee and National EJ Advisory Council, and was a co-author of the human health chapter of the 2014 national climate assessment. Early in his career Sheats practiced law as a public interest attorney.

Yana van der Meulen Rodgers

is a Professor in the Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations, and in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies, at Rutgers University. She also serves as Faculty Director of the Center for Women and Work at Rutgers. Yana specializes in using quantitative methods and large data sets to conduct research on women's health, labor market status, and well-being. Yana has worked regularly as a consultant for the World Bank, the United Nations, and the Asian Development Bank, and she was President of the International Association for Feminist Economics. She currently serves as an Associate Editor with the journals *World Development* and *Feminist Economics*. Yana earned her PhD in economics from Harvard University and her BA in economics from Cornell University. She is originally from the Netherlands and is a mother of three and an avid runner.

Senator Troy Singleton

has devoted his life to public service in government, political, and

policy posts at all levels. His rapid rise to the highest levels in the New Jersey Legislature is a testament to his widely praised talent for assessing, developing, and implementing clear and pragmatic responses to major public policy challenges.

Senator Singleton began his career as Legislative Director for New Jersey Assemblymen Herb Conaway and Jack Conners in the district he would come to represent. He was honored to then serve as Deputy Executive Director of the New Jersey General Assembly Majority Office and Chief of Staff under the highly respected Assembly Speaker Joseph J. Roberts, Jr. In 2011, he was elected to his first term in the New Jersey General Assembly, representing the over 220,000 residents of the 7th Legislative District. Senator Singleton was elected to the New Jersey State Senate in November 2017 and currently serves as Chair of the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee, Vice Chair of the Senate Economic Growth Committee, and as a member of the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee, and Judiciary Committee.

During his time serving in the legislature, Senator Singleton had a significant number of proposals signed into law. His primary focus is on job creation, economic development, domestic violence prevention and expanding educational opportunities for the children of the state of New Jersey. As such, Senator Singleton has received numerous awards for his public service and legislative acumen from business, education civic, labor and non-profit organizations.

Penny Venetis

is the Dickinson R. Deboise Scholar at Rutgers Law School, where she is a Clinical Professor of Law and the Director of the International Human Rights Clinic. Professor Venetis is an expert in both civil rights law and international human rights law, and pioneered efforts to integrate international law into U.S. law. Her scholarship focuses

on the intersection of human rights and constitutional law. While on academic leave from 2014 to 2017, Professor Venetis spearheaded a number of gender-justice projects as the Executive Vice President and Legal Director of Legal Momentum (formerly NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund) the first women's rights legal organization in the country.

Professor Venetis's work has been featured in two documentaries. "I Voted?" premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2016. The film which shows how computerized voting machines can be hacked, and elections stolen, was produced by Katie Couric. "I Am Jane Doe" (2017), the second documentary to feature Professor Venetis, won multiple awards and was the impetus for federal legislation protecting sex trafficking victims.

Linda Weber

See *InterSectional - Candidates*.

Jennifer Weiss-Wolf is a leading voice for equitable menstrual

policy in America. Newsweek called her the "architect of the U.S. policy campaign to squash the tampon tax."

Jen is the author of *Periods Gone Public* (Oct. 2017), which tells the story of the modern political movement for menstrual equity, and puts forth a powerful, proactive policy agenda.

Jen's series in *The New York Times* shed new light on the issue, as have her numerous op-eds and essays in *TIME*, *Newsweek*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Ms. Magazine*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Glamour*, and others. She is cited widely in the media, including by *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *NPR*, *NBC*, and *PBS*.

Jen is a lawyer with expertise in nonprofit leadership and development; by day she serves as a vice president and the inaugural women and democracy fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law. She is a Board member of *I Support the Girls and Girls Helping Girls*.

Period., and on the Advisory Board of *Zana Africa Foundation*.

Erin Worrell is an out trans woman and attorney living in Philadelphia, PA. she is the former President of the Philadelphia Freedom Band, an LGBTQIA and ally community concert and marching band in Philly who were proud to lead the inaugural Princeton Pride parade in 2019. She served on the PFB board for 7 years, is a past board member of Equality Pennsylvania, and a regular volunteer for Special Olympics Delaware. She has given guest lectures on the trans experience at Rowan University since 2013. she holds a degree in foreign language from Drew University and a law degree from Temple University Beasley School of Law. By day she works as a financial crime investigator at a large global bank. In 2020, Erin joined the Board of Directors for The Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice.



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