

FIIFTY

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CAMPAIGN

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

Hartford Region

Presenters

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YWCA IS ON A MISSION TO

**ELIMINATE RACISM,
EMPOWER WOMEN, AND
PROMOTE PEACE, JUSTICE,
FREEDOM AND
DIGNITY FOR ALL.**



YWCA HARTFORD REGION FOUNDED IN 1867

**FOR MORE THAN 150 YEARS WE HAVE BEEN AT THE
FOREFRONT OF THE MOST PRESSING SOCIAL
MOVEMENTS.**

From voting rights to civil rights, affordable housing to pay equity, and from gender based violence prevention to health care reform and access to childcare; we continue to advocate at the intersection of racial justice and gender equity.

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CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

- In 2020 the Office of the Secretary of State published the [Secretary of State's Report on Gender and Racial Composition of Connecticut State Boards and Commissions.](#)
- During the 2021 Legislative Session, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted Public Act No. 21-35 declaring racism a public health crisis and [Public Act No. 21-49](#) which set in action efforts to diversify state boards and commissions.
- YWCA Hartford Region was an active advocate for the passage of both laws; standing on its mission to eliminate racism and empower women. The 50/50 Campaign galvanizes a local response to deepen this work.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

- Participation on municipal boards and commissions often serve as a pipeline to representation in public office, especially for people of color and those who identify as women.
- “The 50/50 Campaign” calls for equitable representation on municipal boards and commissions, especially those focusing on quality of life issues for residents within a municipality.
- The 50/50 Campaign urges municipalities to review and amend policies, processes and practices in order to increase recruitment, appointment and retention of people of color and those who identify as women.
- Alignment of the gender and racial composition of municipal boards and commissions with the state’s most recent U.S. census population data. The goal is to eventually achieve a minimum of 50% women and 50% people of color (or parity).

METHOD

- **Discovery:** Through in-depth research uncover gaps, barriers and inequities in recruitment, appointment and retention that limit accessibility for people of color and those who identify as women.
- **Strategy:** Using the information acquired from the discovery phase, create a comprehensive plan tailored to each municipality to advance the recruitment, appointment and retention of people of color and those who identify as women on local boards and commissions.
- **Public Campaign:** Promote each municipalities' investment and commitment to equitable representation by mobilizing the public awareness campaign.

Testimonial

Mayor Suzette DeBeatham-Brown (Bloomfield)

- Mayor DeBeatham-Brown is the first Black women to serve in the leadership role in the Town of Bloomfield. **“If we are not being represented at the table, I believe we get overlooked.** No one sees the vision we see. It is easy for white Americans to look out of their window, through their privilege and see the world differently than we do...I try to talk to people and convince people to serve in their local governments and to show them how important their voices are,” said Mayor DeBeatham-Brown. “But as leaders, we also need to give people access to these tables of change. I don’t wish to build out my own table because that is also a form of segregation we don’t need. **What I am going to do is extend your table so that it reflects the entire community.”**

OUTCOMES

- Increased representation of people of color and those who identify as women on local boards and commissions, with goal of 50/50 representation by 2026.
- Year One (2021): Establish baseline in three municipalities that serve as a prototype; determine current makeup of boards and commissions; based on each municipal baseline, determine goals for year to year to measure increase in representation.
- Year Two (2022): Conduct statewide public awareness campaign; measure response rate in selected municipality (did calls and/or applications increase for board/commission openings? Did more BIPOC/women apply? Identify the 12 municipalities; develop baselines for those 12 to work toward progress in 2026.
- Year Three (2023): Compare, measure and analyze results of three original prototypes: did they see an increase in BIPOC/Women members on Boards and Commissions? Did they meet milestones met in Year One (above)?
- Year Four (2024) and beyond (2025 and 2026): Analyze results from 12 other municipalities identified in year 2 to measure results to goal.

ASK

- Support the campaign by connecting us with local and statewide women lead businesses
- Encourage participation on local boards and commissions
- Assist with the public campaign phase of the work

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