



Press Release
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For Immediate Release

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Real Women Run empowers Utah women to run for public office

SALT LAKE CITY, UT - *Real Women Run* is organizing two nonpartisan events in the next four months to empower women to participate fully in public life and leadership through elected political office at all levels, appointments to public boards and commissions, working on campaigns, or simply learning more about our political system.

The *Real Women Run* networking social, on Thursday, January 24th, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the YWCA Center for Families, will be an opportunity for interested women to meet one another, hear from experienced Republican and Democrat leaders as well as political candidates, and learn more about opportunities to change Utah's political life.

At the national level, women won seats in the U.S. Congress in record numbers in the 2012 U.S. elections, giving them the strongest representation they have ever held in the U.S. House and Senate – 77 women will serve in the U.S. House of Representatives and 20 in the U.S. Senate when Congress reconvenes in January 2013. Women also came out in record numbers to cast their votes for the President, Senate and House races and key state initiatives.

But there is much work to do in Utah, which ranks 44th in the nation based on our proportion of female members in the state legislature – just 16.3%. No women represent Utah in the U.S. Congress or hold statewide elected office. Despite this gross imbalance, statistics show that women running for office win elections at the same rate as men, but nationwide, fewer women choose to take the initial step to run for office. Utah's School Board is much better at representing women. Approximately 71% of all women who ran for school board in 2012 won their elections, compared with 60% for men. Of all Utah's candidates for School Board this year, women made up 43%, and won 47% of the available seats.

The *Real Women Run* training in women's public leadership, on Saturday, March 16th, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Miller Campus of Salt Lake Community College, will feature keynote speakers, current and past female politicians, public appointees, media experts, campaign managers, and others. Topics include: how women make a difference in politics; public boards and commissions; campaign management and strategy; budget, finance, and fundraising; and media, message, image and presentation. To register for either event, please visit www.realwomenrun.org, or contact Robin Pratt at rpratt@ywca.com or 801.537.8606.

Real Women Run was one of five national projects highlighted at the National Vision 2020 Congress in November in Portland, Oregon. "It was an honor to be highlighted as one of the best projects in America to promote women as leaders. We intend to continue to encourage and train women to run for public offices in Utah. Women can and should contribute their unique perspectives to public policy. We intend to continue this project for many years," said Sheryl Allen, a former Utah Legislator, Vision 2020 delegate, and member of the Real Women Run organizing committee.

Real Women Run – Find Your Voice is a collaborative nonpartisan effort that began in 2011 to empower women to participate fully in public life and leadership. The coalition includes the YWCA Salt Lake City, The Hinckley Institute, at the University of Utah, Salt Lake Community College, Vision 2020, AAUW, League of Women Voters of Utah, current and former elected female officials and representatives from political parties in Utah, and other

organizations that support women.

The Hinckley Institute of Politics at the University of Utah is a bipartisan institute dedicated to engaging students in governmental, civic and political processes; promoting a better understanding and appreciation of politics; and training ethical and visionary students for service in the American political system. Since its founding, the Hinckley Institute has provided a wide range of programs for students, public school teachers and the general public.

The YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. For more than 100 years the YWCA Salt Lake City has reached out to Utah women and their families with friendship, life-changing programs, and opportunities to learn, lead, and influence the world around them.

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