



Still Persisting

Last year, millions of women participated in sister marches around the world advocating for the respect of human rights and a general intolerance for hate and bigotry. Organized and led by women, these became known collectively as the Women's March.

One year later, women are once again speaking out on a variety of issues, such as reproductive rights, environmental justice, immigration, and race relations. 2017 has brought many challenges to the forefront of public awareness. Sexual harassment being one of the loudest. The #MeToo movement and Times Up campaign represent progress in bringing awareness to the prevalence of sexual harassment in our society, and the urgency to do something about it. This is just one topic for which women and men will be speaking out against this January 20th, as the world comes together on the anniversary of the original Women's March to make their voices heard.

Upcoming Initiatives:

- *January 20, 2018:*
Women's March in Seneca Falls
- *January 21, 2018:* **Women's Solidarity March in WNY** at Buffalo City Hall
- *February 12, 2018:* **Healthy Relationships: Teen Dating Violence Awareness Summit for High School Students** Buffalo State College
- *March 1, 2018:*
Annual Women's History Month kick-off Event. National theme: *Nevertheless She Persisted: Honoring Women Who Fight all Forms of Discrimination against Women*
Downtown library.
4:00-5:00PM
- *March 10, 2018:*
First Amendment, First Vote: Pilot summit for middle and high school girls

Women's March in Seneca Falls, New York

Thousands will gather in Seneca Falls, the birthplace of women's rights, on Saturday, January 20th for a solidarity march and rally. The per-Sisters for Women's Equality rally will take place at 10 a.m. at the Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls. The event will include a variety of local and state female leaders, including Karen King, the director of the Erie County Commission on the Status of Women. For more information, go to the Women's March in Seneca Falls Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1484607838301339/>

Local and Global Solidarity Marches

Like last year, sister marches will take place across the state, country and world. Here in Buffalo, there will be a Women's Solidarity March hosted by the WNY Peace Center. It will be held on Sunday, January 21 at 2:00 PM in Niagara Square. You can find out more information on the event's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1621879744564288/>.

There will also be marches held in New York City, Washington, and other major cities across the country and world.





Social and Civic Empowerment Healthy Relationships

Females between the ages of 16 and 24 experience intimate partner violence at a higher rate than any other group, and nearly triple the rate of the national average. Considering the impact that intimate partner violence has on an individual's physical, mental, and reproductive health; as well as on educational and economic opportunities, these numbers reflect a concern for the future and wellbeing of women and men. Dating violence, bullying, and abuse are unfortunate realities that exist in the dynamic relationships within the teenage cohort which impede on the right to education, safety, happiness, and equality.

The ECCSW is collaborating on a Healthy Relationships initiative with several community partners including the school's of social work at Buffalo State College and the University at Buffalo and area high schools to raise awareness about teen dating violence. This initiative will focus on leadership development, advocacy skills building, and peer mentorship.



There will be a summit to kick-off this initiative, held at Buffalo State College on February 12. For more information about the summit, including how you or students you know can get involved, contact Karen King, at karen.king@erie.gov

First Amendment, First Vote



While women make up nearly half the population, they are woefully underrepresented in elected office. The ECCSW in partnership with Friends of Women's Rights National Historical Park, and the Women March in Seneca Falls, will be launching a new initiative designed to engage high school girls, grades 9-12 in the political process. First Amendment, First Vote aims to prepare high school girls to register and vote in their first election as well as learn about the legislative process and envision themselves running for public offices. The ECCSW is actively recruiting high school girls for this pilot program.

The first pilot summit will be held on March 10, 2018 at the Erie County Public library. For more information about the summit contact Karen King, at karen.king@erie.gov



Economic Empowerment Women in the middle skills workforce

WNY Women's Action Coalition



The WNY WAC, convened by the Erie County Commission on the Status of Women is comprised of a cross section of WNY organizations committed to eliminating gender based discrimination and to fostering empowering and sustainable environments for all women in our community to grow and flourish.

WAC is currently developing several initiatives including the development of a *Collective Impact Model*; a strategic method of working together across multiple perspectives to address large complex social problems, and a collaborative legislative agenda to address gender based economic inequities.



A culture shift in the way that middle skills jobs are perceived in regards to gender depends on all of us; teachers, parents, guidance counselors, and employers, in order for women and girls to participate in these opportunities and ultimately achieve economic stability and growth. ECCSW is committed to bringing these opportunities forward and helping promote awareness about middle skills training and employment to women and girls in our area.

This year, the American Association of University Women released an updated report revealing that women continue to lag behind in earnings compared to men, at approximately eighty cents to the dollar. At the same time, women continue to be underrepresented in some good paying industries. Middle skills jobs— those that require a high school diploma but not a college degree; such as carpentry, electric work, construction, manufacturing, transportation, and metal work are growing areas of employment that provide training, upward mobility, benefits, and good pay. Yet these jobs and the training programs that support them are not reaching women, who make up more than 40% of heads of households. According to a report by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, only 7% of workers in manufacturing jobs, and only 9% of workers in transportation, distribution, and logistics jobs are women. These are growing fields which are projected to have thousands to over a million positions available over the next decade.

The ECCSW hosted a Middle Skills pre-apprenticeship & apprenticeship webinar which highlighted the need for recruitment of, and industry buy-in for women participating in the middle skills workforce. This informative webinar featured a variety of statewide organizations, training projects, local alliances and unions that are currently providing programming and support for women in the middle skills field, as well as representatives in Western New York who are interested in starting initiatives right here in Erie County. Leah Rambo of New York City-based Sheet Metal Workers Local 28, explained the success of her program depended deeply on recruitment throughout the community. Peter Coleman of the Buffalo Niagara

Manufacturing Alliance discussed that the culture of the trades industry, often perceived as dark, dirty, and dangerous, needs to shift from being a male-dominated field, and soon there will be vacancies to fill as a cohort of workers ages into retirement. Rudy Mulligan, a carpenter explained how she enrolled in an apprenticeship program only upon seeing a billboard that depicted a woman in a hardhat, signaling a need to motivate young girls who may already have the skills, but may not have the awareness that these opportunities are also for them.