

2022 PROGRESS REPORT

Civic Matters

CREATING CONNECTIONS, COMMUNITY,
AND CHANGEMAKERS IN NYC





Deborah Martin Owens

Dear Friends:

I am thrilled to report that, 107 years after our founding, Women Creating Change (WCC) remains committed to supporting New York City (NYC) women on their civic engagement journeys and championing equity-focused policies that improve women's lives and their communities.

2022 was an ambitious and impressive year for WCC—a period of growth during which our **Civic Matters** initiative continued to thrive and disrupt systemic barriers to civic engagement for historically underrepresented and disenfranchised women in NYC. We refined and expanded our programming, created and unveiled new opportunities for learning, and increased equitable civic participation. We welcomed many new, committed, and dynamic women to the WCC community.

Our participants gained knowledge and valuable tools to take civic action and create change! WCC also remained active on the policy front, championing and supporting mission-aligned policies—such as voter rights—and continued to build synergistic alliances and partnerships.

At WCC, 2022 also was a year of transitions. We were sad to bid farewell to our outgoing President & CEO, Carole J. Wacey, who led WCC during a critical period—steering the organization through a strategic planning process that resulted in our new name, vision, mission, and program focus. Upon Carole's departure, WCC was fortunate to have former WCC board member, Margaret A. Caspler, step in as Interim President & CEO. Finally, we began a recruitment process to find WCC's next visionary leader, who will join us in 2023 and take the organization to new heights. We cannot wait to introduce our new CEO to this powerful community.

WCC needs generous supporters and champions like you to do this work. I am excited to tell you more about our impact and invite you to stay informed of what is coming next for WCC in 2023—including the launch of our Civic Matters Hub, an online learning and civic engagement platform, and the Civic Matters Fellowship for future women civic leaders.

Please join us on this journey to expand civic engagement in NYC!

Sincerely,

Deborah Martin Owens
Chair, Board of Directors

At Women Creating Change, we are committed to equitable civic engagement for women in New York City—especially those who have been the most systemically disenfranchised. Our goal is to support women to participate and make a difference in their lives and their communities.

We believe that when women take civic action, New York City thrives.



Civic Matters

2022 was an important year for our signature program, **Civic Matters**. We continued to build our community of NYC women who are thirsty for new knowledge, skills, connections, and ways to make a difference.

We also increased the energy, frequency, and quality of our civic engagement programming for—and with—NYC women.

2022 AT-A-GLANCE

Number of
Events

25

Number of
Attendees

596

WORKSHOP TOPICS

**Introduction to
Civic Engagement**

(with the Civic Matters
Workshop Design Team)

**Spotlight on
Participatory
Budgeting**

(with NYC Civic
Engagement Commission)

**Public Speaking &
Storytelling**

**Racial Equity
and Government
Accountability**

(with the Literacy
Assistance Center)

**Introduction to
Advocacy and
Coalition Building**

(with the
Advocacy Institute)

**Introduction to
Advocacy and Local
Governance**

(with the
Advocacy Institute)

WCC's Civic Matters program creates opportunities for historically disenfranchised women to learn about civic engagement and why it matters; use action-oriented tools and resources; practice advocacy skills; and engage directly in advocacy for themselves. Our Civic Matters Workshops are safe spaces where women can gather to learn, network, and organize to create change in their communities.

WORKSHOP GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Civic engagement workshops are informed by women on topics of significance to women.



Workshops provide an opportunity to connect with other like-minded women.



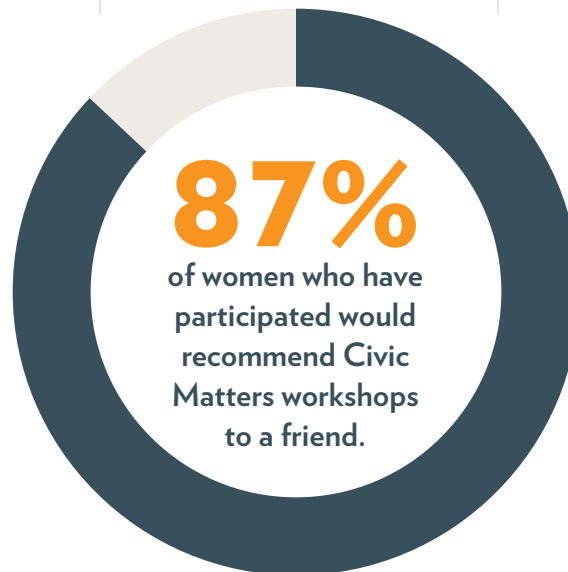
Create programming that women will want to engage with again and again.



Women feel a sense of belonging because WCC co-creates a welcoming, inclusive, and comfortable environment.



Women leave the workshops feeling they have learned something relevant to them and their communities.



WORKSHOPS IN ACTION

WCC partners with an evaluator to ensure that our programs set and meet clear objectives and that we understand the impact they make.

Here is a snapshot of our program learnings:



WHAT WOMEN LIKE ABOUT THE CIVIC MATTERS WORKSHOPS



Gaining awareness, growing their knowledge, and learning how to support their civic engagement journey



Great facilitation and accessible, relevant content explained in a way that makes sense and feels welcoming



Building community with and being inspired by other women



Opportunity to ask questions and share insights with other women

WHAT WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING

FOR WOMEN, BY WOMEN

“The WCC Civic Matters workshops are a place to go, find community, and learn how to be leaders of change. They instill a sense of solidarity that propels women into confident action.”

BELONGING

“I just love the support the women in the meeting have for each other. It creates a safe and understanding environment. I always feel welcome.”

CONNECTION

“It was nice to see other women from other backgrounds and be able to connect with them. Interactions like that don’t really happen for me, especially with the pandemic; everything has changed entirely. So it was nice to connect with other people and relate to one another.”

THANK YOU SY SYMS FOUNDATION



WCC would like to thank the Sy Syms Foundation for their longstanding support of WCC and the Civic Matters Program. We are grateful for their commitment to supporting expanding civic engagement opportunities for New York City women.

THE WORKSHOP DESIGN TEAM: FOR WOMEN, BY WOMEN

A core principle of the Civic Matters program is that participants are co-creators of our programs. The Workshop Design Team (WDT) fulfills this promise.

Often, women are looking to make an impact in their communities but are unsure where to start. The WDT provides space for those who want to learn, gain leadership skills, and make a difference.

About the Workshop Design Team (WDT)

The WDT allows for our workshops to be built with specific attention to the variety of needs and lifestyles each woman brings into the space. We have accomplished this by developing a community-led curriculum and providing exciting, collaborative leadership opportunities for New York City women.

WCC offers a series of interactive WDT sessions where previous workshop participants gather to shape the direction of the workshop program. As participants, women become full collaborators in co-developing the future of the Civic Matters Workshop Series, including reflecting on previous workshops and making decisions about future topics, goals, outreach, and materials.

In 2022, nine WDT participants were given the responsibility to collaboratively redesign the WCC Civic Matters “Introduction to Civic Engagement” Community Workshop. The team also helped to facilitate the newly designed workshop.

2022 Highlights:

- + The WDT successfully created a revamped workshop and helped to facilitate its debut.
- + Women gained more professional experience and could add “designing and implementing workshops” to their resumes.
- + Women met and shared ideas with other amazing women in a safe, virtual space and grew their communities and networks.

Join the
Civic Matters
Workshop
Design Team



“Watching my parents’ engagement and involvement in things we call ‘Quality of Life’ issues sparked my passion for civic engagement. I grew up with the understanding that you have to play a role in the things that affect your life.”



Tanya Cruz
*Civic Matters Workshop
Design Team Leader*

“It is only when we are able to reflect on our own personal journeys, our lived experiences, and then have the opportunities to communally share them with others, that we really give others permission to do the same.”

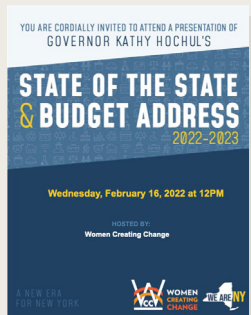


Reda Taleb
*Civic Matters Workshop
Design Team Leader*

Partnership Matters

WCC's Civic Matters programmatic and policy work is focused on expanding civic participation and creating access to democratic processes. We are proud to call some of the following organizations partners in our programming and policy work to support equitable civic participation in New York City.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE 2022 EVENTS THAT WCC HELD WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:



New Era for New York: A Discussion with Governor Hochul's Administration

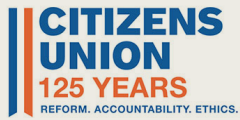
WCC hosted a **discussion with Governor Kathy Hochul's administration** about the proposed state budget priorities and how they may impact women in New York City.



ywca

Speak Up, Be Heard: Learn How to Amplify Your Voice Through Civic Engagement

WCC and the **YWCA of New York City** partnered to host a **webinar** as a part of the YWCA's Annual Stand Against Racism campaign. The discussion focused on the importance of civic engagement and how to get involved.

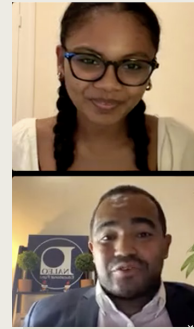


Redistricting Training

WCC and **Citizens Union** held a **virtual training** focused on redistricting and showcased resources that civically-minded people can use to understand redistricting.

Showing Up Matters!

WCC partnered with **NALEO Education Fund** for an **Instagram Live conversation** featuring Juan Rosa, National Director of Civic Engagement at NALEO, and WCC's Haydon John to discuss the importance of voting and what New Yorkers needed to know before heading to the polls.



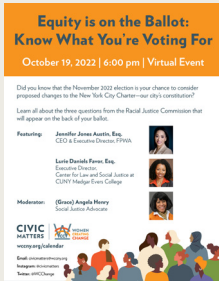
It's Your Money: Participatory Budgeting Ideas Generation for the Bronx and Manhattan

WCC, along with partners **New York Immigration Coalition** and **The League of Women Voters of the City of New York**, hosted two **The People's Money: Participatory Budgeting Ideas Generation Sessions** focused on citywide participatory budgeting to help identify community needs and brainstorm ideas for Bronx- and Manhattan-based projects.



Communities Speak: Rebuilding the Post-Pandemic City Through Community Engagement

WCC hosted a **Civic Matters Instagram Live** where we welcomed **Kaitlyn Nelson**, the Reports & Digital Team Lead of **Communities Speak**, a Columbia University research project that aims to rebuild the post-pandemic city through community engagement. The event unveiled **initial findings** from the Communities Speak Survey, including a **crisis in childcare affordability and accessibility** that causes particular harm to Black and Hispanic families.



Equity is on the Ballot: Know What You're Voting For

Leading up to the midterm elections, WCC was busy activating voters with events and opportunities to inspire civic engagement. WCC held a virtual event with partners from the **NYC Racial Justice Commission** about the ballot proposals. WCC endorsed all four ballot proposals and is thrilled that each passed!



History Matters

In March, 2022, WCC was invited to speak at the commemoration of “Frances Perkins Place,” honoring founding WCC Member and labor activist, Frances Perkins. A public advocate in New York City, Perkins became the first female Cabinet Member as the U.S. Secretary of Labor under President Franklin D. Roosevelt and was an architect of the New Deal, Social Security, child labor laws, the minimum wage, fair labor standards, and other fundamental public rights and benefits.



L to R: Mayor Eric Adams, Frances Perkins' grandson Tomlin Perkins Coggeshall, New York State Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon, City Council Member Erik Bottcher, NY State Senator Brad Hoylman, Hell's Kitchen historian James Kaplan, and WCC former Chair and current Counsel Helen Diana (Heidi) Reavis, Esq. attend the street renaming in honor of WCC founding member and changemaker Frances Perkins.

It is a reminder that WCC's activist roots lie deep in the heart of New York City—and that legacy is alive and continues to inspire the present, 107 years later.

WCC's staff and Board members joined numerous high-profile New York City and State representatives for the public presentation re-naming West 46th Street between 9th and 10th Avenues in Manhattan, where Perkins had worked at a settlement house and to establish public education. WCC former Chair and current Counsel, Helen Diana (Heidi) Reavis, Esq., spoke movingly about the inspiring legacy of Perkins, whose impact on labor rights, public safety, education, and women's rights are still felt today.

“In honoring Frances Perkins, it is our responsibility to strive towards the goals that she embodied—including ensuring all New York City women have the same opportunities to create change and engage in civic life.”

Helen Diana (Heidi) Reavis, Esq.



Helen Diana (Heidi) Reavis, Esq.



Frances Perkins

L to R: WCC former Board members Phyllis Lusskin, Mary Murphree, and Margaret Caspler with former WCC President & CEO Carole Wacey

Looking Forward Matters

We are proud of what WCC has accomplished in 2022, and there is much to look forward to in 2023.

WCC will welcome our new President & CEO.

WCC's dynamic new leader will build on our progress and strategic plan, form new partnerships, and expand our programs, outreach, and development efforts so the organization may continue to thrive.

The Civic Matters Hub will go live!

We are thrilled to report that the Civic Matters Hub will launch in 2023. This action-oriented online resource will support New York City women to learn about civic engagement, take action, access resources, and join an online community of like-minded women.

WCC's 2023 Civic Matters Workshop Design Team will create and lead a new workshop.

WCC's second Workshop Design Team cohort will serve in a leadership capacity and work with our program team to choose a topic, create a presentation, and facilitate a new Civic Matters workshop.

WCC will create a plan for our Civic Matters Fellowship.

In preparation for the Fellowship's upcoming launch, WCC will continue building a relationship with its program partner, **Coro New York**, and together we will create the first Civic Matters Fellowship cohort.

We hope you will follow our progress, join us on this journey of expanding civic engagement for NYC women, and **support our work!**



Board Matters

Welcoming New Board Members in 2022

On behalf of the entire Women Creating Change Board of Directors, we are thrilled to welcome the newest Board members to the leadership of the organization. These women bring energy, enthusiasm, and expertise to our work, and we could not be more excited to work with them to create meaningful change in New York.

Deborah Martin Owens
Chair, WCC Board of Directors



Leslie Kawano
*Director of Customer Success at S&P
Global Market Intelligence*

Leslie was elected to the board of WCC in July, 2022 and cares deeply about helping others and creating inclusive environments. As Director of Customer Success at S&P Global Market Intelligence, she helps enterprises find value in a product suite of multi-asset-class datasets and web-based workflow solutions. With more than 9 years in the Financial Services industry, Leslie has experience in account management, enterprise sales, and building and leading customer success teams.



Katarina Mescal-Pevzner
*Senior Vice President, Global Cardholder
Services at Mastercard*

Kate was elected to the board of WCC in July, 2022, and she is passionate about the advancement of gender equality. As Senior Vice President, Global Cardholder Services at Mastercard, she sets and advances Mastercard's strategic vision for loyalty services. Prior to joining Mastercard, she spent 12 years at American Express, working on international premium products. She also has served as a legislative assistant for the co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women in the United States House of Representatives. She began her career in retail consulting at Accenture.

HONORING HELEN BIRENBAUM



On November 18, 2022, WCC lost a longstanding WCC Board member and supporter, Helen Birenbaum. To celebrate her, we are proud to establish the **Helen Birenbaum Civic Education Fund at WCC**. The Fund honors Helen's lifelong civic participation, contributions to the education field, and support and commitment to WCC's vision for a more just and equitable New York City where all women are civically engaged. The Fund will support WCC's Civic Matters program—a research-based initiative that disrupts systemic barriers to civic engagement for underserved women and expands opportunities for learning and equitable civic participation.

wccny.org/birenbaumfund

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Margaret A. Caspler

Vice Chair (until 5/24/22)

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Helen Diana (Heidi) Reavis, Esq.

Reavis Page Jump LLP

Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP

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(starting 7/1/22)

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Lea Giddins

Senior Manager, Program and Policy

Haydon John

Senior Fellow, Program and Policy

Anita Kwok

Communications Intern

Natasha Lerebours

Program and Policy Intern

Anita Mathew

Operations Manager

Veronica Sexton

Program and Policy Intern

Sylvana Soto

Communications Intern

Carole J. Wacey

President and CEO (through 7/1/22)

WCC is committed to partnering with impact-driven organizations, vendors, and consultants with aligned missions—those engaged in driving positive change in our city, including:

Action Evaluation Collaborative

Amalgamated Bank

Anat Gerstein, Inc.

Barsamian Communication

inDinero

SAX LLP

Deneisha Thompson, MA, LMSW

Trillium Asset Management

WCA Technologies

Jasmine Wilson

VISION

Women Creating Change envisions a more just and equitable New York City where all women are civically engaged.

MISSION

Women Creating Change is an inclusive community that partners with organizations and with New York City women who have been systematically excluded from civic processes to develop programs and influence policies that result in more equitable civic engagement.

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