WCC WOMEN CREATING CHANGE
EST. 1915

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Empowering Women, Strengthening Communities

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Letter From The CEO

SHARON SEWELL-FAIRMAN
President & CEO

SABRINA STRATTON
Chair of the Board

2024 was a year of bold action and deep resolve. At WCC, our commitment to empowering women and gender-expansive individuals through civic engagement, advocacy, and leadership remained unwavering.

As the housing crisis deepened, the focus turned to critical investments in healthcare, human services, and reproductive justice. Despite growing economic, political, and environmental challenges across New York City, our leadership strengthened through expanded advocacy in Albany and proud support of the Human Services Council's #JustPay campaign.

A major milestone of the campaign came with the city's approval of a long-overdue cost-of-living adjustment for human service workers, most of whom are women of color.

Efforts with partners to advance Black maternal health and secure reproductive freedom led to the passage of Proposition 1, ensuring this right is protected in the New York State Constitution. Communities were equipped with tools to lead through the Civic Matters Hub, while partnerships with University Settlement and The New School fueled vital research. *Unequal Ground* exposed the structural roots of the city's persistent gender pay gap and continues to inform our work.

We also found new allies. Our partnership with the New York Liberty brought reproductive justice to center court and engaged thousands in civic action.

That same spirit of resilience, leadership, and progress continues to guide us. As key elections approach, your voice and your support are more important than ever. Together, we move closer to a future where every woman can shape lasting change.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
Sharon Sewell-Fairman, *President & CEO &*
Sabrina Stratton, *Chair of the WCC Board*

Civic power drives change. WCC empowers women through education, advocacy, and partnerships to drive lasting reform.

Who We Are

Women Creating Change (WCC), formerly known as the Women's City Club of New York, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan activist organization dedicated to advancing women's rights and shaping the future of New York City.

Founded in 1915, WCC works to advance gender and racial equality by equipping women of color, women experiencing financial hardship, and gender-expansive individuals, with the knowledge, tools, and resources to advocate for the issues that matter most to them. WCC collaborates with partners, policymakers, and advocacy groups to drive real change in economic opportunity, education, healthcare, safety, reproductive justice, and environmental justice.

WCC connects women with key stakeholders to learn, act, and engage. We empower women to lead change, shape policy, and strengthen communities, redesigning systems for a more equitable New York City.

At WCC, we believe every woman has the power to make a difference.

Vision

To empower women in New York City to lead, influence, and drive change in their communities.

Mission

WCC empowers women to build just and inclusive communities by breaking down systemic barriers. Through research, education, and community involvement, we help women lead, take action, and connect with key organizations, elected officials, and each other to advance gender and racial equality in New York City.

Our Values

WCC advances civic engagement through programs and policies that build on our legacy while expanding inclusivity across New York City. We see women's participation as a powerful strategy for removing barriers to a more just and equitable democracy.

Rooted in the belief that civic life must reflect our city's full diversity, we empower people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. WCC is a space for those committed to challenging systemic inequities and acting on shared values of inclusion, participation, and justice.

Equity & Justice

We are dedicated to creating equal opportunities and driving systemic change through advocacy and representation to address historical inequalities, particularly for women of color, women experiencing financial hardship, and gender-expansive individuals.

Inclusivity & Intersectionality

We embrace diverse perspectives and prioritize underrepresented communities, ensuring our programs, policies, and partnerships reflect the needs of those we serve—driving positive growth through education and engagement.

Accountability & Integrity

We hold ourselves accountable to our community, stakeholders, and partners through transparency, respect, and ethical conduct. Our commitment to representation and diversity ensures we collaborate with those who share our values.

Learning & Innovation

We discover new ways to improve WCC by listening to the voices of the community members and partners we aim to serve. Ongoing reflection enables us to continuously integrate new insights to drive social impact.

Issue Pillars

WCC drives systemic change in New York City by anchoring our educational tools, leadership programs, and advocacy in research-based evidence. As we expand our initiatives and advocacy efforts, our work is centered around five strategic pillars, each vital to empowering women and dismantling structural inequities:

Health and Reproductive Justice

Ensuring bodily autonomy and equal access to comprehensive healthcare, including reproductive and maternal care.

Safety

Advancing policies and programs that protect individuals and communities from violence and harm.

Economic Justice

Working to close wage gaps, expand access to benefits, and advance policies that promote financial security and economic mobility for women.

Environmental Justice

Working to ensure safe, sustainable environments for communities disproportionately burdened by environmental harm.

Education

Promoting equitable access to quality education and lifelong learning for underrepresented communities.

Research

Unequal Ground Report

WCC was thrilled to release the second report in our eye-opening series exploring the persistent gender pay gap in New York City:

Unequal Ground: The Impact of Industrial and Occupational Segregation on Women's Economic Outcomes in New York City, was developed in partnership with The Center for New York City Affairs at The New School.

Unequal Ground provides an in-depth analysis of how the uneven distribution of men and women across various job types and economic sectors contributes to wage disparities and perpetuates economic inequity. The report highlights how occupational and industrial segregation within the New York City workforce impacts wage differences, lifetime earnings, retirement security, and overall economic independence for women.

To address these issues, the report outlines comprehensive strategies designed to dismantle these entrenched barriers.

5,000+

stakeholders reached

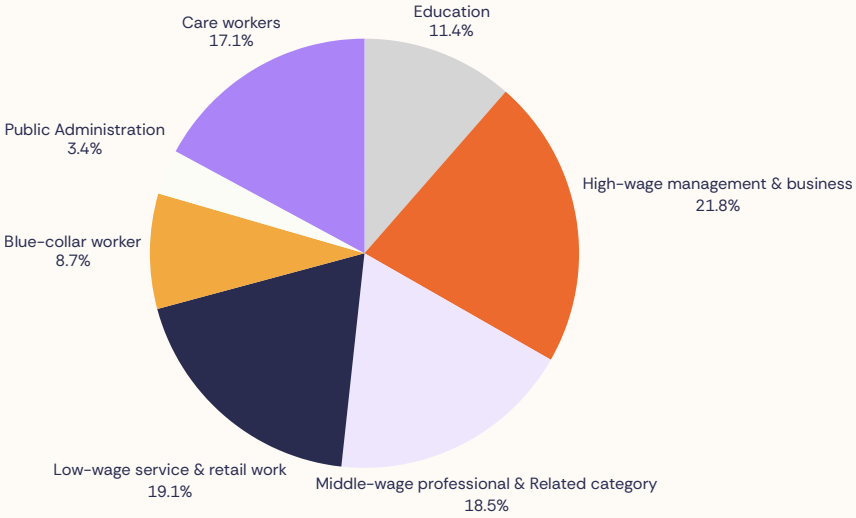
3

Policy Recommendations

Report Highlights

40% of women working in high-wage industries reside in Manhattan (compared to 23 percent of women overall), while 27 percent of women care workers live in the Bronx (compared to 14 percent of overall women workers). Lower-wage women workers are overrepresented in outer boroughs, an economic fact that shapes their neighborhoods and families.

New York City Women's Workforce (2022)



Policy Recommendations

Pay Transparency Requirements: Strengthen the law by requiring clearer salary criteria, tighter pay ranges, and including contractors and interns. Improve enforcement with stronger penalties, public reporting, and record retention.

Protect Workers From Salary History Questions: Urge large employers to conduct gender pay audits and publicly report findings to address wage gaps, promote transparency, and raise women's wages.

Public Sector Pay Equity: Back legislation to improve compensation reporting and recruitment in city agencies. Modernize worker benefits, expand tax credits, and invest in mentorship, flexible work, and careworker pay.

Explore The Report

The findings of this report not only illuminate the enduring challenges within our labor markets; they reinforce the need for a concerted and comprehensive approach to fostering systemic change.

Explore the findings and recommendations in *Unequal Ground* - click here

Leadership Development

In 2024, WCC launched a new civic leadership initiative in partnership with University Settlement (US), advancing our mission to build pathways for underrepresented New Yorkers to become engaged civic leaders. This ongoing initiative brings civic engagement and advocacy training to staff members from across University Settlement's 30 locations in Lower Manhattan and Downtown Brooklyn.

Feedback

- WCC's inaugural Civic Leadership Cohort launched in late 2024 with 20 participants who spent four months deepening their understanding of government systems and strengthening their advocacy skills. Through workshops and personalized coaching, participants created civic action plans focused on the issues most important to them.

- Topics included coalition building, the power of personal narrative in advocacy and power mapping.

  82% rated the cohort as excellent. All feel more knowledgeable about how to take action and are more likely to do so, and 94% feel more confident taking action.

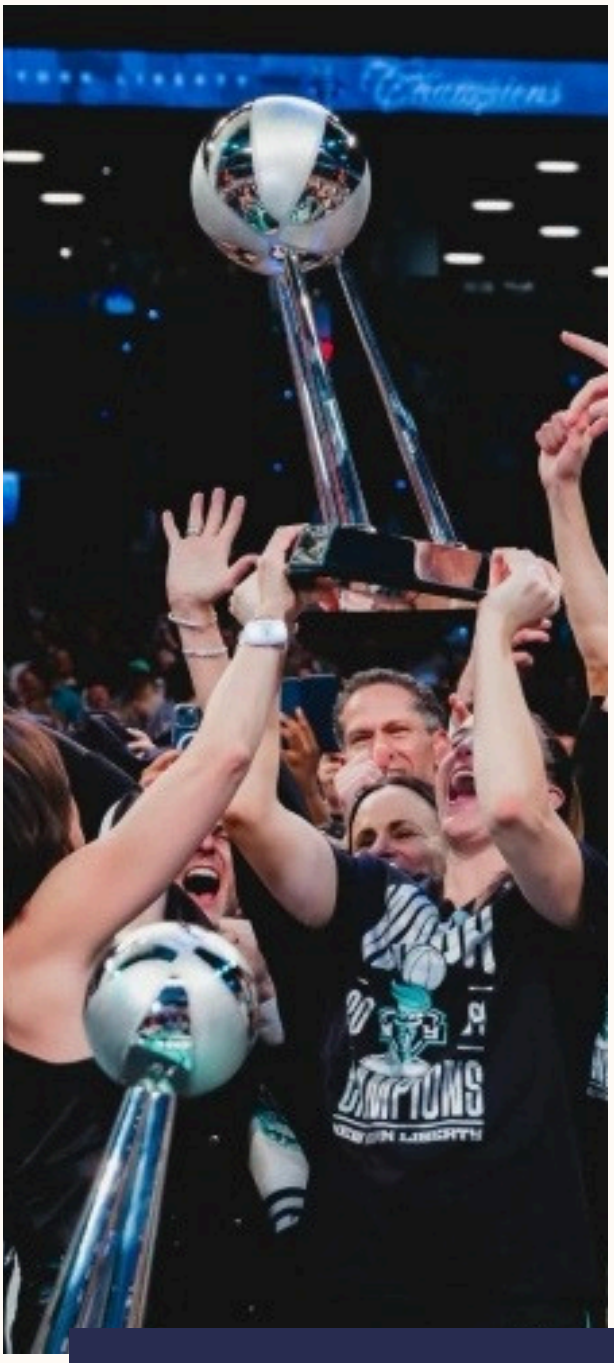
20

Civic Leadership Cohort Participants

100%

would recommend the Cohort

New York Liberty Commissioner's Cup



WCC & the New York Liberty: Champions for Reproductive Justice.

Our collaboration with the New York Liberty has energized the movement for reproductive justice. Together, we've sparked vital conversations about the link between voting and reproductive justice—reaching more than 281,000 people through a joint PSA, social media campaign, and WCC fliers distributed at a Liberty game.

PSA Reach
281,000

This impact was only possible because of the New York Liberty's steadfast commitment and powerful platform. Their fight on and off the court continues to fuel change. WCC received a $20,000 donation from the WNBA in recognition of the New York Liberty advancing to the Commissioner's Cup final. These funds directly supported WCC's mission.

Reproductive justice demands collective action. If you believe everyone deserves the freedom to make their own decisions about their bodies and futures, join us.

Flyers	Visitors to The Hub	Mailing list signups	Household PSA Streams
1,000	1,915	1,345	7+ million

Workshops & Webinars in 2024

Beyond the Podium

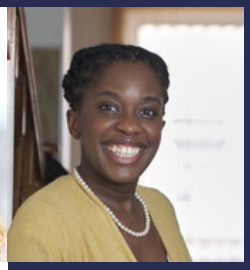
The event delivered a focused analysis of Governor Hochul's State of the State proposals, spotlighting their impact on women and marginalized communities. Participants examined key 2024 policy and budget priorities with a gender equity lens. A dynamic Q&A with Shakera C. Tems, who was Interim Director of Women's Affairs, offered practical tools, resources, and strategies for advocacy. The session empowered 60 attendees to push for policies that drive structural change toward equity. View video.

Pictured: Shakera C. Tems, Senior Policy Advisor, New York State Executive Chamber

CUNY Career Compass for Women Leaders Conference

WCC joined CUNY's Women's Conference Week with a panel on Change Making Careers in Reproductive Justice, featuring leaders from WCC, the New York City Council, and the NY Birth Control Access Project. The discussion highlighted how civic action and careers in reproductive justice drive systemic change. View video.

Pictured:
Laura Eddin, Senior Vice President of Programs and Partnerships, WCC (top left);
Thamar Ferdinand, Executive Director, New York City Council Women's Caucus (top right); Rochelle Rodney, Co-Executive Director, NY Birth Control Access Project (bottom left);
Na'ilah Amaru, Vice President of Policy, Advocacy & Government Relations, WCC (bottom right)



What You Can Do to Increase Abortion Access & Decrease Abortion Stigma in New York City

WCC hosted a webinar led by Laura Edidin, our Sr. VP of Programs & Partnerships, featuring Sophie Nir, CEO of the Abortion Positivity Project, and New York State Assemblywoman Amy Paulin. Nir shared how the WCC community can help end abortion stigma and ensure care for everyone. Assemblymember Paulin detailed legislation to expand access to abortion medication by empowering pharmacists to dispense it and requiring insurance coverage - View video.

Pictured: Amy Paulin, Assemblywoman District 88, New York State Assembly

Policy & Advocacy

Advocacy is crucial for WCC because it turns recommendations into real impact at city and state levels. As a trusted partner to institutions, WCC can co-create civic solutions and amplify their presence in social justice ecosystems, driving meaningful progress.

Events

WCC events:

- WCC *Unequal Ground* Forum
- Boost Your Advocacy Skills Workshop
- WCC Abortion Positivity Project Abortion Rights Forum
- WCC State of the State Forum

Co-hosted events:

- Somos Inc. Puerto Rico Gender Pay Equity Luncheon Session
- New York BIPOC Democracy Table Reception
- WCC/Citizen Action Advocacy Reception
- CUNY Women's Conference Reproductive Justice Panel
- University Settlement Workshop

Media & Recognition

Featured in:
Crain's New York Business, WPIX11, The New York Amsterdam News, and *The New York Post*.

Staff awards:

- Sharon Sewell-Fairman & Na'ilah Amaru – City & State Trailblazer Award
- Na'ilah Amaru – Nonprofit Power Player
- Sabrina Stratton, Ekta Sahni, Tracey Salmon-Smith – Crain's Notable Leaders
- Laura Edidin – named to the Super Lawyers list
- Sharon Sewell-Fairman – Schneps Caribbean Impact Awards

9
WCC events

188,200+
reached through featured media

Advancing Policy

Highlights from 2024

- We supported campaigns across New York to take action on New York State Ballot Proposition 1, formerly the New York Equal Rights Amendment—a pivotal measure to protect equal rights and reproductive freedom in our state. This legislative amendment passed in November 2024.
- Joined the Raise the Wage Campaign which addresses how low-wage occupations disproportionately affect women (especially women of color) by limiting their total earning and undermining their economic security.
- WCC spoke in support of the Safe Hotel Act rally at City Hall to end Sex Trafficking.
- Joined 130+ gender equity advocates in opposing Matt Gaetz's nomination for U.S. Attorney General due to allegations of sexual misconduct.
- Demonstrated at City Hall in support of Equal Pay Day with the PowHer-led coalition.
- As a member of the Human Services Council's Strategy Priority Council, WCC joined fellow nonprofits in meeting with legislators to advocate for a state-level Cost-Of-Living-Adjustment increase—part of the #JustPay campaign to ensure fair wages for the human services workforce. The campaign resulted in a 3.5 percent Cost-Of-Living-Adjustment increase in the City Budget and a 2.8 percent in the State Budget.

Advocacy

Media Coverage

7/16/24 – *Crain's New York Business*
Featured WCC's *Unequal Ground* report, showing women in New York City earn 8% less than men in similar roles—rising to 23% for women of color. It highlighted WCC's call for stronger pay transparency laws and gender pay audits.

7/17/24 – *WNew York City 93.9 | New York Public Radio*
Covered WCC findings showing the gender pay gap widens as women earn more, challenging the notion that higher income leads to greater equity.

9/25/24 – *Urban Matters, The New School*
WCC's Na'ilah Amaru stressed that issues like pay equity and gender-based violence must be central to presidential campaign agendas.

11/27/24 – *The New York Amsterdam News*
In an op-ed, WCC President Sharon Sewell-Fairman called for stronger transparency laws and policy reforms to close the gender wage gap.

Newsletters

January
WCC began the year with new leadership, key advocacy efforts in Albany, and support for expanded ballot access. We responded to major policy addresses and reinforced our commitment to gender equity and civic participation across New York.

February
WCC celebrated Black History Month by uplifting Black women leaders and deepening our advocacy efforts. We hosted the "Beyond the Podium" event on the State of the State and joined the 2024 Legislative Caucus.

March
WCC highlighted key advocacy wins in Women's History Month, including a COLA increase for New York City human service workers and Equal Pay Day actions. We led a panel on reproductive justice, engaged in national and global events, and celebrated Sharon Sewell-Fairman's first year as CEO and her recognition as a 2024 Caribbean Impact Award honoree.

April
WCC highlighted alarming racial disparities in maternal care and applauded New York leaders' investments in prenatal health and reproductive access. We introduced our five core issue pillars and encouraged civic engagement through "The People's Money" initiative.

May
WCC hosted a webinar equipping attendees with tools to advocate for reproductive justice. The conversation offered actionable steps and raised awareness about policies and narratives impacting abortion access across the city.

June
WCC launched an exciting partnership with the New York Liberty to promote voting and reproductive justice during the WNBA Commissioner's Cup. We celebrated major legislative wins for maternal health and hosted a webinar about abortion access titled "What You Can Do to Increase Abortion Access & Decrease Abortion Stigma in New York City."

Advocacy

July

WCC released *Unequal Ground*, a new report on gender pay disparities in New York City, launched at a packed event with sector leaders and elected officials. We deepened our impact through a new partnership with University Settlement.

August

WCC reflected on the historic presidential nomination, celebrated Women's Equality Day, and amplified new research highlighting the link between women's income and the New York City borough where they work, underscoring the urgency of economic justice in our ongoing advocacy.

September

WCC urged New Yorkers to prepare for the upcoming election and support Prop 1 to protect equal rights and reproductive freedom. We marked Shirley Chisholm's centennial, led voter registration efforts, hosted advocacy training, and highlighted the connection between economic justice and civic participation.

October

WCC continued to urge support for Prop 1. We received an Amplify Her Foundation grant, hosted advocacy workshops, and continued our voter engagement campaigns. We also celebrated progress on housing and safety initiatives.

November

WCC celebrated the historic passage of Prop 1, a major milestone in our ongoing efforts to advance equity, justice, and civic participation across New York.

December

As 2024 came to a close, we celebrated key milestones. We launched our University Settlement cohort, highlighted key policy priorities for 2025, and honored our leaders recognized for their advocacy and professional excellence. The year ended with a powerful message: Our voices matter, and together we can drive lasting change.

This year, we stood with communities, fought for justice, and made change happen. Together, we showed that civic power and equity must go hand in hand.

Why Your Support Matters

Answer the call to invest in historically underrepresented communities, empower leadership, and create lasting change. Become a supporter and help turn vision into action:

- **Advance Critical Research & Policy Impact** – Support initiatives and policies that advance gender equity, economic justice, safety, education, the environment, and reproductive justice for women.
- **Invest in Community Leadership** – Equip emerging leaders from historically underrepresented communities with the skills, tools, and platforms to drive change.
- **Demonstrate Strategic Impact** – Position yourself as a champion of equity, civic engagement, and community empowerment

Funding Partner

Funding partners power long-term impact. Their sustained investment fuels strategic initiatives, scales proven solutions, and drives systemic change that uplifts women across New York City and beyond.

Event Sponsor

Event sponsors make bold moments possible. Their support brings people together, amplifies key messages, and supports community action when it matters most.

Individual Donor

Individual donors are the heart of our movement. Every gift, large or small, helps expand access, elevate voices, and advance equity for women and families in our city.

A Word From Our Partners

Working Together to Advance Equity

"As an organization unapologetically committed to the empowerment of women, the New York Liberty were thrilled to support WCC during the 2024 Commissioner's Cup. We're proud to work with organizations like WCC, whose unyielding support enhances our collective ability to create transformative opportunities for women and strengthen our communities."

– Keia Clarke, New York Liberty CEO

Support That Fuels Our Mission

"Amplify Her Foundation proudly shares WCC's vision for a more gender-equitable New York City. Like WCC, we believe lasting change starts by equipping women, particularly those from historically marginalized communities, to lead. We're honored to support the State of Women Conference and its bold, actionable approach to civic education and systemic transformation."

– Laura Risimini, Director of Grants, Amplify Her Foundation

2024 Financials*

9,776,540
Total Assets

254,823
Total Liabilities

9,521,717
Net Assets

**Preliminary and Unaudited*

Our Supporters

We deeply thank our sponsors, funders, and partners. Your generous support and commitment drive our work and strengthen our vision for inclusive civic engagement every day.

$25,000-$150,000

Weil, Gotshal & Manges, LLP

$2,000-$24,999

Tracey-Lee Brown
Penny Cagan
Cindy Chiu
Google
Leslie Kawano
Sruthi Lanka
Deborah Martin Owens
Merck Foundation
Kristine Okalta
Jyoti Rai
Debbie Roman
S&P Intelligence
Ekta Sahni
Tracey Salmon-Smith
Sharon Sewell-Fairman
Sabrina Stratton

$1,000-$1,999

Accenture
Theresa Bertrand
Margaret Caspler
Gail Erickson
Faegre Drinker Foundation
Blake Foote
Angela Henry
Phyllis Lusskin
Debbie Meyer
Lisette Nieves
Helen Reavis
Lori Rodney
Janine Scott
Deborah Speyer
Dayanna Torres
Karthik Viswanathan

$500-$999

Ares Management
Ruth Acker
Mary Ann Arisman
Fermin Espinosa
Betty Jones
Ira Machowsky
Mary C Murphree
Gloria Neuwirth
Lailany Sierra
Andre White

<$500

Vidhu Aggarwal
Joan Alexander-Bakiriddin
Kimberly Allen
Dominick Angelico
Alexandra Armanino
Lydia Armstrong
Vivek Arya
Cheryl Auguste
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Sinead Holly
N Howell
Ruth Inouye
Marjorie Ives
Anwita Kariyananvar
Glory Ann Kerstein
Annette Kudrak
Sherazade Langlade
Madison Le
Arienne Lima
Laura Limuli
Rae Linefsky
Katherine Lobach
Diane Louard-Michel
Jacqueline Lowers
Denise March
Annie Martinez
Vanessa McEvoy
Alicia McGrath
Katarina Mescal-Pevzner
Scott Millstein
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Adrienne Shelton
Aditi Shrikam
Cheryll Smith
Denise Soffel
Diana & Nathan Stern
Sandra Stollar
Marina M Thompson
Dana Trimboli
Denice Williams
Tamara Witham
Laura Wolff

Meet Our Team

Sharon Sewell-Fairman
President & CEO

Laura Edidin
Senior Vice President of Programs and Partnerships

Na'ilah Amaru
Vice President of Policy, Advocacy, and Government Relations

Anya Berdan
Senior Manager, External Relations

Anita Mathew
Operations Manager

Kunsang Dolma
Communications Intern

Alaina DiSalvo
Program and Policy Intern

Ankita Das
Communications Intern

Natasha Lerebours-Mejia
Program and Policy Intern

Consultants

- Anat Gerstein, Inc.
- Barsamian Communication
- Kristy Wallace
- SAE Consulting
- Altior Policy Solutions
- Stephanie Nilva
- Brand K Partners
- Action Evaluation Collaborative
- Amalgamated Bank
- The Office of Gonzamar
- SAX LLP
- Deneisha Thompson
- Trillium Asset Management
- Withum
- WCA Technologies

WCC Board Members

Chair: Sabrina Stratton, Senior Vice President, Northeast Regional Director, Amalgamated Bank
Vice Chair: Sruthi Lanka, Chief Financial Officer, Public.com
Treasurer: Ekta Sahni, Managing Director, Accenture
Secretary: Leslie Kawano, Director of Customer Success, S&P Global Market Intelligence

Board Members (without portfolio):

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Executive Vice President of Strategy and Planning, Zeno Group

Tracey-Lee Brown
Director, Governance Insights Center, PwC

Penny Cagan
Senior Risk Advisor, PwC

Margaret Caspler
Consultant, M. A. Caspler Consulting

Cindy Chiu
Senior Director in Global Regulatory Affairs and Clinical Safety Group, Merck

Kangela Moore
Assistant Director of Law Enforcement, Teamster Local 237

Deborah Martin Owens
Director of Diversity & Inclusion, Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP

Kristine Okolita
Director of Ads Marketing Operations, Google

Jyoti Rai
Senior Vice President Chief Talent Officer, NewYork-Presbyterian

Lori Rodney
Head of Global Communications, Shutterstock

Debbie Roman
Managing Director, Per Scholas New York

Tracey Salmon-Smith
Partner, Faegre Drinker

Janine Scott
Operations Manager, York College of the City University of New York

Dayanna Torres
Vice President, Ares Management Corporation

Sharon Sewell-Fairman
President & CEO, WCC

Future Outlook

Key Priorities

In 2025, WCC will broaden its reach across New York City by deepening partnerships, strengthening programs, and advancing civic advocacy.

Plans include expanding work with community, faith-based, and neighborhood organizations to increase access to civic leadership training. New collaborations with academic institutions, coalitions, and policy stakeholders will support long-term progress and shared goals.

Civic and policy engagement will remain central. The focus will be on connecting communities to decision-making spaces, elevating lived experience through research and testimony, and advancing priorities such as Health and Reproductive Justice, as well as Economic Justice.

Leadership development and civic education platforms will continue to grow, with expanded resources and learning opportunities for individuals and partners.

Innovation

Research will continue to guide action through public reports, events, and community-informed policy recommendations. The inaugural State of New York City Women Conference will bring together stakeholders to elevate women's voices and foster collaboration.

As a trusted civic partner, WCC will co-design solutions with institutional allies, integrating civic learning into each partnership.

Efforts will focus on refreshing the brand, enhancing digital tools, and expanding communication to engage broader audiences while strengthening funding and building sustainability.

The goal remains clear: to create a more just and equitable New York City where more women lead, shape policy, and influence change.

WCC WOMEN CREATING CHANGE
EST. 1915

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Learn more about WCC and our vision to empower women in New York City to lead, influence, and drive change in their communities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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