



# **2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

**MECKLENBURG COUNTY  
WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD  
APRIL 2019**

### Women's Advisory Board

**Mission Statement** - To promote the critical and emerging needs of women in Mecklenburg County through education and service.

**Vision Statement** - Equality for all women in Mecklenburg County.

In 2018, the Women's Advisory Board continued to restructure and reorganize itself. Turnover of the board members continued to be a struggle; however, the board is committed to using the high attrition rate as an opportunity to better diversify membership when vacancies are filled, which has been evident with the last two filled positions. The board is starting to show the diversity that is seen in Mecklenburg County.

The board members began working toward more name and "brand" recognition within the community. This was accomplished through community outreach, hosting guest speakers at the monthly board meetings, and attending or participating as vendors at local events.

Local events attended by board members in 2018:

- Women's March
- A Public Conversation Beyond "She Says:" Sexual Assault in Charlotte
- Breakfast Conversations 2018
- Me Too, Charlotte
- Teacher Talks 2018 - Learning/Education/Delivering
- Moms Demand Action
- Delta Days in the City: Unshackled from Mass Incarceration
- Rowan-Cabarrus CC: Painting with a Purpose
- Women Empowerment
- Charlotte Chamber Business Showcase
- Women United Impact Summit: Resilience Screening
- Second Annual Women's Symposium
- Women + Girl Research Alliance 2018 W+GRA Summit
- Winning Women Wellness Event
- Commissioner Vilma Leake Small Business Consortium
- Cupcakes & Conversations
- Thriver's Talk & Tea: Domestic Violence Brunch & Workshop

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- Inspiring Trust to Transform Charlotte
- Breakfast & a Movie (CHAIN Fund, Inc)
- Mecklenburg County Health Dept Healthy Weight, Healthy Child (HWHC) Breakfast
- Alliance of Black School Educators Scholarship Reception
- Status of Women in NC: Employment & Earnings
- Mayors Youth Employment Program (Volunteer)
- Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) Workshop
- Middle School Resource Expo Talent Showcase
- Families Belong Together Vigil/Rally - 1st Ward Park
- Housing Locational Policy Community Engagement Mtgs
- My Sisters Keeper Awards Lunch
- Salvation Army Women's Center of Hope
- Candidates Forum: A Woman's Perspective on Issues
- Open Streets Voter Registration-501 N Tryon St
- Meet & Eat with Charlotte Mecklenburg Government
- International House Panel Discussion
- Lean in Queen City Launch

Another goal of the board was to focus on developing and establishing committees and committee leaders within the board to assist in moving the group forward in its goals.

These committees are:

- Annual report
- Retreat
- Marketing
- Elevator Speech
- Advocacy
- Program

To better identify ourselves at community events, each board member purchased a WAB tee-shirt (with personal funds). These tee-shirts help to visually unify the group and market our name.

## MECKLENBURG COUNTY WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD

The Board continued to work toward improved communications with the County Commissioners. A mid-year report was presented on October 16, 2018 with an update on the Board's progress. The presentation was well-received and the WAB feels encouraged to continue a more frequent and open dialogue with the Board of County Commissioners.

### CHALLENGES

The Board has experienced ongoing inability to have an impact in the community and in obtaining results without any financial support, social media or online presence of any kind. Additionally, the board has no budget and is unable to facilitate change or even purchase simple items such as a table runner for events to better identify ourselves. The goal of the WAB is to convey to others in Mecklenburg County not only the events we put on and/or participate in, but also to be a more central hub to share/disseminate any information or event that would be of interest on the topic of women in Mecklenburg county.

In an effort to be transparent regarding Women's issues nationally, the board needs to recognize the controversy around the National Women's Equality March. The local Women's equality march separated from the national organization due to the controversy around the political role of the national leadership. But on the positive side, the local march had a great turnout with a good local, county and state leadership presence.

### LOOKING FORWARD: 2019

The Board had an all-day retreat on February 18, 2019 where the group strategized on the following:

- Setting board goals
- Committed presence of a County Commissioner at the yearly Women's Advisory Board Retreat
- Methods for having a larger visibility in the county within our described constraints
- Offer meaningful suggestions to the County Commissioners. This information will be presented to the County Board of Commissioners on April 16, 2019 in our 2018 Annual Report.

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We have adopted the theme of 'Empowering women in the workplace', which was a goal put forth by the County Commissioners during the mid-year report. Some of the action items the Board identified for this goal include:

- Sponsoring a Community Service Day. This will be at Dress for Success to assist women in the workforce.
- Hosting a Women's Equality Day event in August where the focus will be sexual harassment.
- In the coming months, the WAB will focus on issues of sexual harassment and will explore policy recommendations to promote harassment-free workplaces and environments.

### 2018 BOARD MEMBERS

Zhivi Williams – Chair  
Melissa Lefko -Vice Chair  
Ashley Reid – Interim Secretary  
Barbara Thomas– Parliamentarian  
Michelle Ferlauto  
Kimberly Nelson  
Jodi Ohr  
Samantha Abt-Bumgarner  
Ruth Pierce  
Arlene Love  
Lahari Jones  
Rahdreia-Renae Hannibal  
Stacey Sandeford-Lyons  
Chantia Carter

### 2019 BOARD MEMBERS

Zhivi Williams – Chair  
Melissa Lefko -Vice Chair  
Ashley Reid –Secretary  
Samantha Abt- Bumgarner – Parliamentarian  
Jamilah Espinosa  
Yolanda Holmes  
Ruth Pierce  
Corelutta Reid

## MECKLENBURG COUNTY WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD

Kim Nelson  
Michelle Ferlauto  
Stacey Sandeford-Lyons  
Rahdreia Hawkins  
Ms. Abreu  
Ms. Chavez  
Chantia Carter

