

Celebrate Increasing Women's Roles in Public Service
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Fireworks boomed in the air in Delaware and in Washington, D.C., as each political party's convention celebrated its nominee and its vision for America over the next four years. But, perhaps, we should see these light displays as not partisan celebrations, but as a tribute to the heroic deeds of the past and marked festivities for a better and brighter future.

This month and this year are not only about presidential politics and elections. August 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution that granted women the right to vote. Hopefully, you did not miss these celebratory moments of women's suffrage in the speeches of the DNC and RNC. Maybe you did see the significant positions that women hold in each of America's political parties and in public service!

While progress for women is now more apparent, there is still much work to be done to level the playing field for all women to be represented in public office. Having studied and worked in national and Georgia politics for almost twenty-years, I have witnessed the value and importance of women serving and leading in politics. A functioning democratic republic thrives on input from diverse voices, and for too long, women have been on the sidelines. However, I also have observed the views and ideology of an entire cross-section of our population not being adequately or accurately represented. The political field is not equal. Now more than ever, women in our country have the opportunity to close the gap in leadership with fresh perspectives and new ideas. A diversity of thoughts leads to better outcomes – to a greater number of problems solved and a greater number of needs met, across our communities and throughout our state.

Yet the voices of center-right women are lacking and glaringly missing from our political dialogue. Not all women think the same; we are not a monolithic, special interest group. Our state, Georgia, needs to include many voices speaking on issues and serving the interests of our citizens. Thus, we need more women on the right to be a part of the conversation and the solutions.

This summer, I founded VoteHer, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization in Georgia to increase the number of women actively participating in the political process. VoteHer encourages, engages, and educates women in Georgia to participate in politics through voting, advocacy, running for elected office at all levels, and serving on community and government commissions and boards. Through grant support from the Women's Public Leadership Network, we will focus on educating women who believe in conservatism and the principles of limited government and free-market capitalism to participate in politics and run for elective offices. Moreover, VoteHer aligns these women with mentors and provides sufficient training where women will be well-equipped to handle the challenges and opportunities offered in politics.

Our hope is that when we see fireworks on display in Georgia over the next few months and years that these colorful explosions of light represent the sea-change for women representing and leading in our state.



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