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The 2012 Project Teams Up with Rachel's Network to Elect More Women With Environmental Expertise

The 2012 Project today announced that it is partnering with Rachel's Network to inspire women with environmental expertise to run for state legislative and Congressional office in 2012.

"By joining forces with Rachel's Network, we can reach deeper into communities of talented and accomplished women environmentalists. We know many of them will make ideal candidates for office in 2012," said Mary Hughes, founder and director of The 2012 Project. A national, nonpartisan campaign of the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, The 2012 Project is identifying and engaging accomplished women ages 45 and up from industries that are currently underrepresented in state legislatures and Congress.

"Now more than ever, we need committed environmental advocates in our Congress and statehouses. Rachel's Network is ready to recruit women leaders who will speak out on behalf of our families, our communities and our planet," said Winsome McIntosh, who founded Rachel's Network in 1999 as a network of women funders dedicated to environmental causes.

Rachel's Network will contribute its extensive environmental and philanthropic expertise as it works with The 2012 Project to engage potential candidates. The Network will identify outreach opportunities at conferences and association meetings across the United States and deploy former officeholders with environmental backgrounds to speak at those events and via webinars. Women interested in taking the next steps toward candidacy will be connected to training and leadership programs, fundraising networks and political support organizations that can map a route to successful campaigns.

The 2012 Project aims to take advantage of new and open seats that will be created as a result of redistricting. The 2010 elections saw the first significant decline in women state legislators in decades, and the first drop in the number of women in Congress in more than three decades. Women now comprise 17 percent of Congress and 23 percent of state legislatures. The under-representation of women in public office looks unfair in a nation whose population is more than half female – but worse, it has a profound impact on policymaking, with women's distinctive voices muted in the halls of government.

The 2012 Project will soon announce additional outreach partners in its targeted fields, including: science, technology, finance, energy, international relations, health and small business.

For more information about The 2012 Project, visit www.the2012project.us. For more information about Rachel's Network, visit www.RachelsNetwork.org.

About CAWP

The Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is a university-based research, education and public service center. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's changing relationship to politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. CAWP is a leading authority in its field and a respected bridge between the academic and political worlds.

About Rachel's Network

Founded in 1999 and named in Rachel Carson's honor, Rachel's Network's mission is to promote women as impassioned leaders and agents of change dedicated to the stewardship of the earth. Rachel's Network offers members services that maximize their effectiveness as funders and has created trailblazing outreach programs that amplify women's voices and engage emerging environmental advocates.