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For Immediate Release

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**2019 New Jersey County Report Card from the Center for American Women and Politics:
Mercer County Leads the Pack; No County Reaches Parity in City Council Seats**

Mercer County leads New Jersey in both its overall rank for women’s representation among New Jersey counties as well as the number of women serving on city councils, according to new data compiled by the [Center for American Women and Politics](#), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. In a [previous release](#), CAWP announced the county-by-county representation of women in freeholder and mayoral offices, including a new record in 2019 for women freeholders. Tables for those offices can be found at the end of this release.

CAWP has determined that, based on an average of its ranking for women’s representation in city council, freeholder, and mayoral positions, Mercer County is the 2019 New Jersey leader for women’s political participation. Somerset County, tied for second place with Union, improved its position dramatically since 2018, jumping from the 19th spot last year following improvements in all three levels of offices used to compile our ranking. Salem County, which lost women mayors, council members, and freeholders (Salem now has zero women freeholders) over the past year, is 2019’s lowest-ranked county for women’s political representation, dropping from the 13th spot to the 21st.

County Averages

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Freeholder Rank	Mayor Rank	Council Rank	Overall Rank †
Mercer	5	2	1	1
Somerset	1	7	3	2
Union	3	1	7	2
Camden	5	9	3	4
Hunterdon	9	3	6	5
Bergen	2	13	9	6
Middlesex	5	12	7	6
Monmouth	9	5	14	8
Sussex	9	4	15	8
Morris	5	13	11	10
Essex	13	15	3	11
Atlantic	4	10	18	12
Burlington	14	6	13	13
Gloucester	17	8	11	14
Cape May	14	10	18	15
Hudson	19	21	2	15
Ocean	14	15	17	17
Passaic	17	20	9	17
Warren	20	15	15	19
Cumberland	12	18	21	20
Salem	20	18	20	21

† Counties share the same rank if their proportions of women officeholders are exactly equal or round off to be equal.

In 2019, Mercer County has 28 women serving on city councils around the county, an increase of three seats over last year, and women make up 41% of 68 city council members in the county. Women hold 837 city council seats in New Jersey in 2019, making up just 27% of all 3,126 city councilors statewide. Women make up more than 30% of members in the top five counties for women’s representation on city councils: Mercer, (41%), Hudson (36%), Camden (32%), Somerset (32%), and Essex (32%). No county in the state has come near gender parity in city councils. Two counties, Somerset and Bergen, saw double-digit increases in women city councilors this year, while in five counties – Union, Burlington, Cape May, Salem, and Cumberland – the number of women on city councils dropped. Cumberland is the lowest-ranking county for women’s representation on city councils in 2019.

Proportion of Women Council Members by County

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Total:	Women*	%	Rank†
Mercer	68	28 (+3)	41%	1
Hudson	76	27 (+4)	36%	2
Camden	201	65 (+4)	32%	3
Somerset	121	39 (+13)	32%	3
Essex	132	42 (+5)	32%	3
Hunterdon	135	40 (+2)	30%	6
Middlesex	148	43 (+4)	29%	7
Union	135	39 (-6)	29%	7
Bergen	426	119 (+13)	28%	9
Passaic	105	29 (+3)	28%	9
Gloucester	135	37 (+4)	27%	11
Morris	230	63 (+8)	27%	11
Burlington	203	51 (-3)	25%	13
Monmouth	274	67 (+3)	24%	14
Warren	101	23 (+8)	23%	15
Sussex	120	27 (+2)	23%	15
Ocean	182	40	22%	17
Cape May	72	14 (-1)	19%	18
Atlantic	129	24 (+4)	19%	18
Salem	69	12 (-4)	17%	20
Cumberland	64	8 (-2)	13%	21
Totals	3126	837	27%	

*A +/- indicates gains/losses in number of women council members in each county.

†Counties share the same rank if their proportions of women officeholders are exactly equal or round off to be equal.

“There’s a great deal of excitement about the successes women candidates had in the 2018 election, as well as the six women in the 2020 presidential field, but it’s important to remember that half of the women running for president began their political careers in county and municipal government,” said Jean Sinzduk, associate director of the Center for American Women and Politics. “The rate of progress towards political parity in New Jersey is too slow, and if we’re ever going to get there, it will require buy-

in from party leaders on both sides of the aisle in recruiting and supporting women candidates. If you want to see women presidents in the future, support women in local office today.”

Sinzdak also invited Garden State women to participate in CAWP’s campaign training program, Ready to Run®, which will host a [public speaking workshop](#) in September, as well as the [annual flagship campaign training program](#) in the spring.

Tables for women in freeholder and mayoral offices:

Proportion of Women Freeholders by County

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Total Freeholders	Women Freeholders*	%	Rank†
Somerset	5	3 (+3)	60%	1
Bergen	7	4	57%	2
Union	9	5 (+2)	56%	3
Atlantic	9	4	44%	4
Mercer	7	3 (+1)	43%	5
Middlesex	7	3	43%	5
Morris	7	3 (-1)	43%	5
Camden	7	3 (+1)	43%	5
Hunterdon	5	2 (+1)	40%	9
Monmouth	5	2 (+1)	40%	9
Sussex	5	2 (+1)	40%	9
Cumberland	7	2	29%	12
Essex	9	2 (-1)	22%	13
Burlington	5	1 (-1)	20%	14
Cape May	5	1	20%	14
Ocean	5	1	20%	14
Gloucester	7	1	14%	17
Passaic	7	1	14%	17
Hudson	9	1	11%	19
Salem	5	0 (-1)	0%	20
Warren	3	0	0%	20
Total	135	44 (+5)	33%	

*A +/- indicates gains/losses in number of women freeholders in each county.

†Counties share the same rank if their proportions of women officeholders are exactly equal or round off to be equal.

Proportion of Women Mayors by County

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Total Mayors	Women Mayors*	%	Rank†
Union	21	8 (+2)	38%	1
Mercer	12	4 (+1)	33%	2
Hunterdon	26	7 (+1)	27%	3
Sussex	24	6 (+2)	25%	4
Monmouth	53	11 (+3)	21%	5
Burlington	40	8 (+2)	20%	6
Somerset	21	4 (+3)	19%	7
Gloucester	24	4	17%	8
Camden	37	5 (-2)	14%	9
Atlantic	23	3 (+1)	13%	10
Cape May	16	2	13%	10
Middlesex	25	3	12%	12
Morris	39	4 (-1)	10%	13
Bergen	70	7 (-2)	10%	13
Essex	22	2 (-1)	9%	15
Ocean	33	3	9%	15
Warren	22	2	9%	15
Cumberland	14	1 (-1)	7%	18
Salem	15	1 (-1)	7%	18
Passaic	16	1	6%	20
Hudson	12	0 (-1)	0%	21
Total	565	86 (+6)	15%	

*A +/- indicates gains/losses in number of women mayors in each county.

†Counties share the same rank if their proportions of women officeholders are exactly equal or round off to be equal.

About CAWP

The [Center for American Women and Politics \(CAWP\)](#), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers-New Brunswick, is nationally recognized as the leading source of scholarly research and current data about American women's political participation. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's participation in politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. CAWP's education and outreach programs translate research findings into action, addressing women's under-representation in political leadership with effective, imaginative programs serving a variety of audiences. As the world has watched Americans considering female candidates for the nation's highest offices, CAWP's over four decades of analyzing and interpreting women's participation in American politics have provided a foundation and context for the discussion.

