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For Immediate Release

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**2020 New Jersey County Report Card from the Center for American Women and Politics:
Slow Progress on the Path to Parity**

Mercer and Union counties lead New Jersey in an overall ranking of women’s political representation based on an average of women’s representation on local councils, mayoralties, and commissionerships (formerly freeholders), according to data compiled by the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. Mercer also leads in women’s representation on local councils, while Union leads in women holding mayoralties. Somerset holds the top spot for the share of county commission seats held by women.

The annual New Jersey County Report Card issued by CAWP shows incremental progress for the state as a whole. While women broke records for representation on county commissions and mayoralties, those records were broken by small margins in both instances. Women gained a single commissionership since our last report card and currently hold 45 commissionerships, beating the 2019 record of 44 and now making up 33% of 135 county commissioners. The number of women serving in mayor’s offices increased by 8 to 94, just edging out the previous record of 90, set in 2011. This is a slight two percentage-point increase from 2019, and women now make up just 17% of the 565 New Jersey mayors. On local councils, women gained 68 seats, currently holding 905 of 3,103 council seats; this is another two percentage-point increase over 2019, and women now make up 29% of local council members.

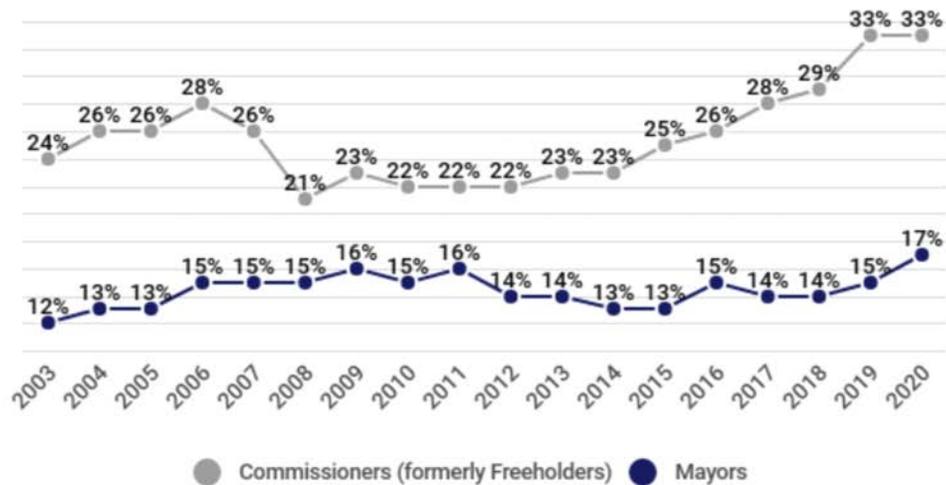
“It’s an exciting year for women and politics, with the election of the first woman vice president, and women once again setting new records as candidates and officeholders,” said CAWP Associate Director Jean Sinzdak, “but the progress here in New Jersey has been glacially slow. Counties where party leaders make women’s representation an imperative, like Mercer and Union, have been making strides. It needs to be an imperative in every county in the state.”

Sinzdak also extended an invitation to Garden State women to participate in CAWP’s [Ready to Run®](#) campaign training program, which will launch in early 2021 with a series of virtual sessions in lieu of our annual two-day program. In response to the ongoing economic strains caused by the pandemic, CAWP will offer the 2021 virtual Ready to Run® sessions free of charge. This is made possible through the generous support of our individual and institutional sponsors.

The slow progress for women’s representation, it should be noted, is not a 2020 problem, as is evident from the history of CAWP’s data collection on women in county commission and mayoral offices, which began in 2003.

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Women as a Percentage of NJ Mayors and Commissioners: 2003-2020



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Somerset County leads the state in women’s representation on county commissions, with 3 of their 5 commissionerships held by women. Women also hold the majority of commission seats in Bergen (57%) and Union (56%) counties. An additional seven counties have county commissions that are 40% or more women: Atlantic (44%), Camden (43%), Mercer (43%), Middlesex (43%), Burlington (40%), Monmouth (40%), and Sussex (40%). In Salem and Warren counties, women hold zero commission seats.

Union County leads in women’s representation in mayoral offices, with 48% of its mayoralities held by women. The next highest proportion of women mayors is in Mercer County, where just 25% of mayors are women. Cumberland County now has zero women mayors, after the sole woman mayor in the county left office. In 15 counties, men hold more than 80% of mayor seats.

Mercer is the only county in New Jersey where women hold more than 40% of local council seats, with 43% of the 68 council seats in Mercer held by women. In three counties, women hold less than 20% of seats on local councils: Salem (19%), Atlantic (18%), and Cumberland (15%).

Full county rankings are on pages 3 and 4 of this release.

For additional information about women in New Jersey politics, including previous county report cards, milestones, and women officeholders currently and over time, visit the [New Jersey Facts page](#) on the CAWP website.

-tables follow-

County Averages

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Commissioner Rank	Mayor Rank	Council Rank	Average of Rank	Overall Rank
Mercer	6	2	1	3.0	1
Union	3	1	5	3.0	1
Middlesex	6	5	3	4.7	3
Somerset	1	13	3	5.7	4
Bergen	2	16	5	7.7	5
Burlington	8	3	12	7.7	5
Morris	12	4	10	8.7	7
Camden	5	12	10	9.0	8
Monmouth	8	7	14	9.7	9
Hunterdon	15	7	8	10.0	10
Atlantic	4	9	20	11.0	11
Sussex	8	9	16	11.0	11
Essex	11	17	8	12.0	13
Hudson	14	20	2	12.0	13
Passaic	18	14	5	12.3	15
Gloucester	18	9	12	13.0	16
Salem	20	5	19	14.7	17
Cape May	15	14	18	15.7	18
Ocean	15	17	16	16.0	19
Warren	20	17	15	17.3	20
Cumberland	12	21	21	18.0	21

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

Proportion of Women Commissioners by County - 2020

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Total Commissioner	Women Commissioners	%	Rank
Somerset	5	3	60%	1
Bergen	7	4	57%	2
Union	9	5	56%	3
Atlantic	9	4	44%	4
Camden	7	3	43%	5
Mercer	7	3	43%	6
Middlesex	7	3	43%	6
Burlington	5	2 (+1)	40%	8
Monmouth	5	2	40%	8
Sussex	5	2	40%	8
Essex	9	3 (+1)	33%	11
Cumberland	7	2	29%	12
Morris	7	2 (-1)	29%	12
Hudson	9	2 (+1)	22%	14
Cape May	5	1	20%	15
Hunterdon	5	1 (-1)	20%	15
Ocean	5	1	20%	15
Gloucester	7	1	14%	18
Passaic	7	1	14%	18
Salem	5	0	0%	20
Warren	3	0	0%	20
Total	135	45 (+1)	33%	

Counties share the same rank if their proportions of women officeholders are exactly equal or round off to be equal. A +/- indicates a gain/loss in the number of women commissioners in each county.

Proportion of Women Mayors by County - 2020

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Total: Mayors	Women: Mayors	%	Rank
Union	21	10 (+2)	48%	1
Mercer	12	3 (-1)	25%	2
Burlington	40	9 (+1)	23%	3
Morris	39	8 (+4)	21%	4
Middlesex	25	5 (+2)	20%	5
Salem	15	3 (+2)	20%	5
Hunterdon	26	5 (-2)	19%	7
Monmouth	53	10 (-1)	19%	7
Atlantic	23	4 (+1)	17%	9
Gloucester	24	4	17%	9
Sussex	24	4 (-2)	17%	9
Camden	37	6 (+1)	16%	12
Somerset	21	3 (-1)	14%	13
Cape May	16	2	13%	14
Passaic	16	2 (+1)	13%	14
Bergen	70	8 (+1)	11%	16
Essex	22	2	9%	17
Ocean	33	3	9%	17
Warren	22	2	9%	17
Hudson	12	1 (+1)	8%	20
Cumberland	14	0 (-1)	0%	21
Total	565	94 (+8)	17%	

Counties share the same rank if their proportions of women officeholders are exactly equal or round off to be equal. A +/- indicates a gain/loss in the number of women mayors in each county.

Proportion of Women Council Members by County 2020

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Total:	Women:	%	Rank
Mercer	68	29 (+1)	43%	1
Hudson	76	27	36%	2
Middlesex	148	52 (+9)	35%	3
Somerset	121	42 (+3)	35%	3
Passaic	105	35 (+6)	33%	5
Union	135	45 (+6)	33%	5
Bergen	408	135 (+16)	33%	5
Essex	133	43 (+1)	32%	8
Hunterdon	133	42 (+2)	32%	8
Camden	201	61 (-4)	30%	10
Morris	231	69 (+6)	30%	10
Gloucester	136	38 (+1)	28%	12
Burlington	200	55 (+4)	28%	12
Monmouth	273	72 (+5)	26%	14
Warren	101	25 (+2)	25%	15
Sussex	119	29 (+2)	24%	16
Ocean	181	44 (+4)	24%	16
Cape May	72	16 (+2)	22%	18
Salem	69	13 (+1)	19%	19
Atlantic	132	24	18%	20
Cumberland	61	9 (+1)	15%	21
Totals	3103	905 (+68)	29%	

Counties share the same rank if their proportions of women officeholders are exactly equal or round off to be equal. A +/- indicates a gain/loss in the number of women council members in each county.

About CAWP

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