

# IGNITE

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE

### ABOUT US

Since 2010, IGNITE has been equipping young women-identifying people with the knowledge and opportunities to become political leaders who are committed to building an equitable shared future for everyone.

“It’s abundantly clear that America needs these new political leaders who represent the full diversity of our country and who have the perspective, passion, and perseverance to solve our most urgent problems and serve the public good—in every level of government and in each step of the political process. We are innovating new ways to activate young people’s civic engagement and help them to be the leaders they want to be and that our country needs.”



— Sara Guillermo,  
Chief Executive Officer

### IMPACT

We trained

6,000

young women in political leadership

IGNITE participants engaged in political action

40%

more than their peers

10

IGNITE alumni won their seats

We engaged women in

30+

states

### 18 IGNITE women ran for office in 2022-2023

**Munira Abdullahi** **WON**  
OH - State Rep, District 9

**Kristen Gonzalez** **WON**  
NY - State Senate, District 59

**Nikki Perez** **WON**  
CA - Burbank City Council

**Leah Wolfthal**  
TX - Houston City Council

**Mary Black** **WON**  
NC - Raleigh City Council

**Christine Hernandez**  
CA - Huntington Beach Union High School

**Caitlin Quinn** **WON**  
CA - Petaluma Board of Education

**Crystal Williams** **WON**  
NJ - Newark Board of Education

**Aurin Chowdhury** **WON**  
MN - Minneapolis City Council, Ward 12

**Chiquita Jackson**  
MD - House of Delegates, District 22

**Nayma Silver-Matos**  
NY - State Assembly, District 72

**Jocelyn Yow** **WON**  
CA - Eastvale City Council

**Rianna Czech**  
PA - State Senate, District 50

**Allison K. James-Frison**  
NJ - Newark Board of Education

**Amy Vele** **WON**  
NY - Peekskill Board of Education

**Karla Garcia**  
TX - Dallas Independent School District

**Samantha Perlman**  
MA - Marlborough Mayor

**Jessica Weaver** **WON**  
CT - Newington School Board

## IGNITE ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

**Aurin Chowdhury** won her 2023 race for Minneapolis city council in Ward 12. As a first-generation Bengali American, Muslim American, Aurin's background, coupled with her eight years of experience organizing for climate action, workers' rights and housing justice, made her the most viable candidate on the ticket. Aurin focused efforts to ensure people across the gender spectrum participated in the political process, turning out an incredible vote. She secured 6,500 first-choice votes—more than the other two candidates combined.



“IGNITE set me up to run to immediately improve conditions for working families, but also to set up future generations for success so that we're not continuously cycling through the same systems of oppression.”

**Shania Bennett** worked on Cherelle Parker's successful campaign for mayor of Philadelphia: “I did IGNITE's Run Now training and it introduced me both to the idea of running myself and the idea of working on larger campaigns. I learned everything from door-knocking and field plans to ethical finance.” Shania got behind Cherelle because she ran as her authentic self. She had a great story about growing up on government assistance, and how the cheese wasn't thick enough to grate, but how it makes the best macaroni and cheese. “Every time I heard her tell that story on the campaign trail I saw people light up and identify with her. IGNITE and Cherelle showed me a different way to run as a woman. Now I'm going to law school with a plan to run for a judgeship.”

“The first time I voted when I was 18, I was also on the ballot. I was the youngest elected committee person in Philadelphia's history.”



**Nashra Mohammed** serves as the youngest board member on the Environmental Commission in Lincolnwood, Illinois. She has brought a fresh perspective to decision-making on issues such as contracting, community clean-ups, solar power, and even the value of social media communication to engage the public. She is excited to use her board service to develop a concept suggested by a local high school student to use community composting to build a community garden. Nashra believes her IGNITE experience gave her the energy and willpower she needed.

“It's so important for boards to allow younger members in, especially people that are interested in making a change. I'm happy to have a seat at the table and voice my opinion.”



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS



## #IGNITetheVote – Voter Activation

By 2028 Gen Z and Millennials will be the largest and most diverse voting bloc in the United States. Yet they still face significant barriers to voting like inadequate political knowledge, struggles to connect their vote to impact and not understanding the voting process.

**Our 2022 #IGNITetheVote national campaign reached over 800,000 young people**, helping them navigate the process of securing ballots and casting informed votes. By providing digital voting tools, leveraging IGNITE ambassadors and other influencers, and working with well-respected brands, IGNITE organizes campus registration efforts, raises awareness, mobilizes voters, and overcomes voter suppression. Throughout all these activities IGNITE connects voting to the issues participants care most about.

The results are striking. **IGNITE participants voted at an astounding 96%**. Young women turned out to vote in near-historic numbers, motivated not by party, but by the issues impacting them most: abortion access, racial inequity, mental health, and mass shootings.

## IGNITE the Capitol – Advocacy

Through full day legislative advocacy trainings and events at the federal and state level, participants gain the skills and confidence to advocate for issues they care about.

In 2022-2023, more than **600 IGNITE women advocated** for voting rights, campaign finance reform, codifying reproductive rights into law, rape kit accessibility, and menstrual equity, with **60% visiting their state capitols**. IGNITE participants spent hundreds of hours calling, writing, using social media and meeting with legislators to make their voices heard.



## UPLIFTING GEN Z VOICES

IGNITE amplifies voices across the spectrum of Gen Z priority issues. Among many others, **Julianne Lempert**, UCLA student and policy chair for IGNITE, demanded better access to rape kits and post trauma care for survivors on campus [in the Los Angeles Times](#). **Emily Kern**, **IGNITE Milwaukee Fellow**, wrote for [DC Journal](#) in support of pro-abortion Justice Janet Protasiewicz's win on the Wisconsin Supreme Court. **Jasmine Thomas**, **IGNITE Oklahoma City Fellow**, [wrote an opinion piece in The Oklahoman](#) advocating for criminal justice reform. **IGNITE CEO Sara Guillermo** spoke out on Gen Z political issues in the [New York Times](#), and is a regular columnist for [The Hill](#) on issues including [mental health and women in politics](#), the [youth wave in politics](#). She authored a piece about the triumph of abortion rights in the off-year elections as conservatives ['reap what they Roe.'](#)



The New York Times

Los Angeles Times

THE HILL



THE OKLAHOMAN



## WHEN YOU INVEST IN IGNITE...

You're making an impact on our shared future. IGNITE helps young women-identifying people find their political power — and gives them the tools to use it. You're reshaping our political system so the people most impacted by policies are the ones making policies. You're empowering young women to see themselves as civic and political leaders who can impact every stage of the political process. You're helping civically minded young people flex their political power and change-making potential. You help Gen Z step into their power and build a better future for all. Join us—and together, we are showing the world what's possible when the next generation of women takes the helm of leadership.



[ignitenational.org](https://ignitenational.org)