



READY • TO • RUN™

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AAUW of Alabama Ready to Run™



The goal of *Ready to Run*™ is training qualified Alabama women for leadership roles in government. Participant recruitment targeted the 105 House districts, 35 Senate districts, and 67 counties in Alabama with concentration in the geographical areas of AAUW of Alabama's branches and other major cities in Alabama. Small group training sessions were held in Auburn, Birmingham, Decatur, Florence, Gadsden, Huntsville, and Montgomery. Auburn University, Women's Leadership Institute; Alabama Women's Initiative, Inc.; and Clarus Consulting Group were three partners in the project. A legal partnership was established with Rutgers University, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Center for American Women in Politics. The project was funded by an AAUW Educational Foundation Community Action Grant, registration fees, contributed scholarships, and in-kind contributions. Project Co-Directors are Dr. Elizabeth Hendrix and Mildred Lanier. The ongoing project will be led in 2009-10 by Wanda Foster and Susan Sheppard.

Impact – Outcomes

The underserved Alabama citizens, namely women and children, will be impacted indirectly by women leaders addressing women's issues as they run for office and ultimately are elected to decision making positions in government. In the long run, women leaders will change legislation to benefit women and girls.

Alabama has zero women in the United States Congress. There are only five women serving in statewide elected executive positions. Only four of the 35 state senators are women and only 14 of the 105 state house representatives are women computing to 12.9% women in the Alabama legislature. Alabama ranks 48th in the nation.

In two years, July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009, 148 women enrolled in *Ready to Run*™. The goal is 20% of the women enrolled will run for an elected government position in 2009 with an expected 5% increase in the number of women running in 2010. The statistical outcome will not be calculated until December 2009.

Ready to Run™ provided visibility in the state. AAUW of Alabama is now recognized as the leader in training women for leadership roles in government. The exposure to AAUW increased membership and enhanced AAUW's image with our 35 partners in the Alabama Constitution Convention Coalition. Most of the participants took advantage of the networking opportunities and continue their relationships throughout the state in many other activities.

How to Implement

Collect and compile research for current data; develop the training curriculum and materials with professional experts; develop and implement a marketing, public relations, and communication plan; develop and implement a logistics plan for on-site training; negotiate and sign contractual agreements; develop and implement an evaluation plan; promote with AAUW branches and other community organizations.

Tips for Success

Plan in a timely manner, follow the plan, be flexible, stay within the budget, and have fun.

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