



FAIRFAX COUNTY
COMMISSION *for* **WOMEN**
Promoting Equality for Women & Girls



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BIENNIAL REPORT

FY2024–FY2025

(July 1, 2023–June 30, 2025)



LIST OF CURRENT COMMISSIONERS AS OF JULY 1, 2025

Alyssa Batchelor-Causey, *Chair-At-Large Commissioner*

Helen Cole, *Vice Chair—Hunter Mill District*

Jordan Tautges, *Vice Chair—Springfield District*

Amber Beichler, *At Large-Trans Woman Commissioner*

Enjoli Ramsey, *Commissioner—Braddock District*

Alesia Taylor-Boyd, *Commissioner—Franconia District*

Phylicia L. Woods, *Commissioner—Providence District*

Ayla Zhang, *Student Commissioner*





MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It is my honor to introduce the 2023–2025 Biennial Report of the Fairfax County Commission for Women. As Chair of this all-volunteer body, I am continually inspired by the depth of commitment, lived experience, and equity-driven vision my fellow Commissioners bring to our shared work.



This report marks a pivotal moment in the Commission’s journey. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we undertook a period of rebuilding and renewal. What has emerged is a re-energized Commission—one that is focused, strategic, and deeply aligned with Fairfax County’s strategic priorities, the One Fairfax Policy, and the Department of Family Services’ core values.

With support from the Department of Family Services, we launched an ambitious six-month strategic planning process, grounded in the Gains, Gaps, & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County report. This process sharpened our priorities and

clarified where our efforts can have the greatest impact.

This report reflects more than a planning effort. It captures the breadth of what we’ve accomplished and the bold vision that propels us forward. Over the past two years, we’ve deepened partnerships, amplified community voices, and focused on reducing disparities and advancing gender equity across all nine magisterial districts.

We are proud to serve the residents of Fairfax County and to champion the full participation, well-being, and dignity of all women and girls who call this place home. We are grateful for the trust placed in us—and as we look to the future, we remain committed to building a county where women and girls have the opportunity to thrive.

With Gratitude,

Alyssa Batchelor-Causey

Chair, Fairfax County Commission for Women



THE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN'S MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Commission for Women is to advise the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on policies and initiatives to promote gender equality, eliminate violence against women, and honor women and girls in Fairfax County.

FAIRFAX COUNTY COUNCIL TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Commission has representation on Fairfax County's Council to End Domestic Violence (CEDV), which brings together senior-level public officials and community leaders to take action against intimate partner violence and guide the development of a coordinated and collaborative community response to intimate partner violence. CEDV is composed of Fairfax County elected officials, leaders of public safety, nonprofit leaders, public schools, judiciary, human service agencies, survivor representatives, and community members representing the faith community and local universities.

MEMBERS WORK TO ACHIEVE FOUR MAIN GOALS:

1. Engage the community in a collective response for the prevention and intervention of intimate partner violence;
2. Support victim safety and autonomy and promote offender accountability;
3. Increase coordination and consistency of system and community interventions and service provision; and
4. Advise the Board of Supervisors on policy and legislative priorities for improving the county's response to intimate partner violence.

To achieve these goals, CEDV members work in collaboration with other coordinated community response bodies such as the Domestic Violence Network, the Step Up 4 Kids Coalition, the Lethality Assessment Program Team, and the Domestic Violence Action Center. CEDV offers the Commission an opportunity to learn from county leaders about Fairfax's unique approach to combat intimate partner violence and to stay abreast of ways to best serve women and girls in Fairfax County.





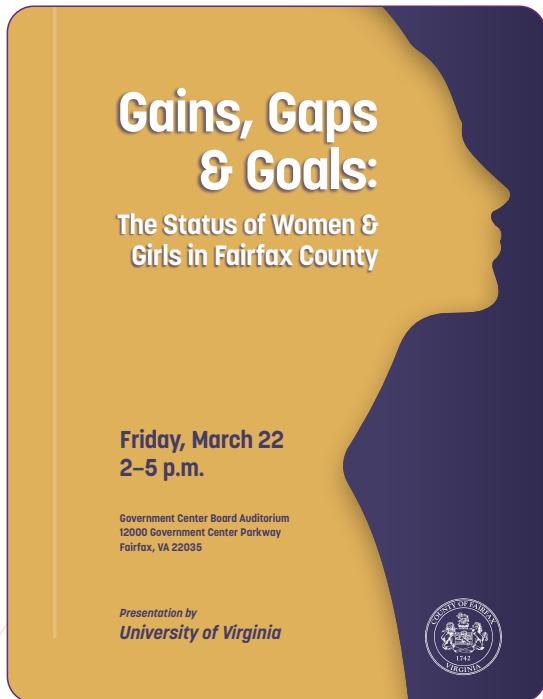
GAINS, GAPS, & GOALS: THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

In September 2022, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors tasked staff with standing up a short-term multi-agency workgroup, in partnership with a university, to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the status of women and girls in the county. The Commission collaborated

with the workgroup and the University of Virginia's (UVA) Biocomplexity Institute and Initiative in the Social and Decision Analytics Division to complete the 2024 Gains, Gaps, & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County report. The report, released by the Department of Family Services in March

2024, examined how economics, health, and work-life balance impact the lives and well-being of women and girls in Fairfax County. To better understand the impact, researchers from UVA and the Commission hosted community conversations to hear directly from women and girls living in Fairfax County. These conversations added personal insight and context that better informed the recommendations outlined in the report. Commissioners also participated in a community conversation with the researchers to ensure our experiences and recommendations were reflected in the report.

The report was only the beginning. Since its release, the Commission has convened several community events highlighting the key findings of the report and used the recommendations to develop our new strategic action plan.



Gains, Gaps, & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County was held in March 2024.

GAINS, GAPS, & GOALS: THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY EVENT

In March 2024, the Commission and workgroup that evaluated the status of women and girls in the County, hosted an event at the Fairfax County Government Center where members of the UVA research team publicly presented key findings from the Gains, Gaps, & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County report. The event began with the Women's History Month 2024 Proclamation, which was presented by Supervisor Dahlia Palchik and Supervisor Kathy Smith to Commissioner Amber Beichler. Beichler spoke on the Women's History Month theme, Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and highlighted the strides we have made to further equity and inclusion in Fairfax County.

Following the proclamation, UVA research team members, Stephanie Shipp and Joanna Shroeder, presented key findings and joined a Q&A panel to discuss and provide insight based on their experience in their respective fields. The panel included:

Melanie Akwule,
Founder and CEO of MINWO Inc.

Hunter Gunn,
Senior Director of Community Health at Inova Cares for Women and Children



Salima Hemani,
Founder and CEO of SZH Consulting LLC

Jaime Hirschfeld,
Director of Client Sales and Services at FlexProfessionals

Monica Jackson,
Advisory Board Member of the Fairfax Child Care Council and the Virginia Small Business Council

Rida Karim,
Student Board Member on the Fairfax County School Board

Commissioner Phylicia Woods provided closing remarks. The event was recorded by Channel 16 and is available on the Fairfax County Government webpage: Gains, Gaps & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County.





HEALTH MATTERS: A SPOTLIGHT ON THE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

In May 2024, the Commission hosted Health Matters: A Spotlight on the Health of Women and Girls in Fairfax County. Following the publication of Gains, Gaps, & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County and the March event, the Commission continued the conversation by spotlighting key health findings and discussing ways all Fairfax County stakeholders can work together to reduce barriers and disparities faced by women and girls.

Eileen Long-Farias,
*Director for The Women's Center's
Education Program*

Lady Nwadike,
*Facilitator Supervisor for Fairfax
County's Public Health Youth
Ambassador Program*

Joanna Schroeder,
*Data Science Research Specialist
at UVA*

Bonnie Stabile,
*Associate Professor and Associate
Dean of Student and Academic Affairs
in the Schar School of Policy and
Government at George
Mason University*



Attendees heard from a dynamic group of panelists discussing key findings and the impact of work-life balance and economic circumstances on health. The panelists were:

Annie Le-Hernandez,
*Supervisor with the Adult Behavioral
Health Outpatient Program with Fairfax
County Community Services Board*

Both events were well attended by members of the Board of Supervisors and their staff as well as leaders from the County, community-based organizations, and community at large. These events provided the Commission with a unique opportunity to leverage insights, which led to the design and inspiration of our strategic action plan.



CELEBRATION OF ACCEPTANCE: RECOGNIZING PRIDE THROUGH CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND INCLUSION EVENT

Commissioners participated in the Celebration of Acceptance: Recognizing Pride Through Children's Mental Health Awareness and Inclusion event, hosted by multiple Fairfax County agencies in May 2024. The event was dedicated to promoting children's mental health and fostering a culture of inclusion and acceptance. While the event targeted youth ages 13-18, individuals of all ages attended.

Attendees learned about various resources, programs, and organizations that support

the well-being of our LGBTQ+ youth. The event served as an opportunity for parents/caregivers, educators, and community members to gain valuable insights and foster allyship. Activities included free food trucks, special prize giveaways, a panel discussion, and wellness activities. The Commission supported the event by attending planning meetings with the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, providing mental health resources, and networking with community members.

REVAMPING THE STUDENT COMMISSIONER POSITION

Each year, the Commission selects a Fairfax County high school female student to serve as our Student Commissioner. This position provides a unique and youthful perspective that is extremely valuable to the Commission's work focusing on greater equity for girls in Fairfax County. We are continuing to identify ways to elevate the Student Commissioner's experience with the Commission and its work to advance equity for women and girls in the County. In 2024, we created the Student Representative Committee to identify ways to maximize the Student Commissioner's position.

We instituted a more robust onboarding process that gave Student Commissioners enhanced resources to carry out their duties effectively. The Student Representative Committee also recommended the Student Commissioner serve on the Women's History Month Committee, draft the Women's History Month section of the biennial report, and participate in introductory meetings with each Commissioner. At the conclusion of the Student Commissioner's tenure, the Commission will provide recommendation letters in support of post-graduate opportunities.





STUDENT COMMISSIONERS

Over the last two years, the Commission has had two incredible Student Commissioners who brought fresh ideas, thoughts, and perspective on issues impacting young women in Fairfax County.

Liz Hernandez Ramirez, a senior from West Potomac High School, served as our Student Commissioner from 2023-2024. Ms. Hernandez Ramirez shared her experiences and activism regarding high school groups focused on the importance of mental health and wellness for youth. For example, she assisted with the Commission's planning for the Celebration of the Acceptance:

Recognizing Pride Through Children's Mental Health Awareness and Inclusion event.

Our current Student Commissioner is Ayla Zhang. She began her appointment in the fall of 2024 and has committed to serve an additional year on the Commission through spring of 2026. Ms. Zhang is a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology and an outstanding student leader, athlete, and volunteer. She played a key role in planning the Commission's 2025 Women's History Month Breakfast: Moving Forward Together.

2024 K9 KRAWL 5K

Commissioners participated in the annual Fairfax County Police Department K-9 Krawl 5K in October 2024, which took place at the Fairfax County Public Safety Headquarters. The event is a unique opportunity for dog lovers to come together to observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month and bring awareness to the link between domestic violence and animal cruelty. (A report by the Urban Resource Institute and the National Domestic Violence Hotline found 89% of victims with pets say the person who caused them harm threatened, hurt, or killed their pets as leverage to

prevent them from leaving or to force them to return in order to care for the animals.) Participants walked together to show solidarity against domestic violence and promote a safe community. Attendees had opportunities to socialize with fellow dog lovers and learn about various pet-related services and products. Educational booths with information about resources for victims of domestic violence and animal welfare were also available.



THE 12TH ANNUAL VIRGINIA WOMEN’S CONFERENCE

In October 2024, Commissioners attended a one-day conference in Roanoke, Virginia, focused on Elevating Your Future. The conference provided an opportunity for Virginia women of all ages to meet, network, and learn from experts on a variety of topics. We heard from keynote speaker, Angie Kim, New York Times bestselling author and recipient of the 2024 Virginia Literary Award for Fiction for her most recent novel, Happiness Falls. Ms. Kim encouraged the audience to always go after their dreams, to shift how we think about ourselves, and always see the best

in others. The conference offered several breakout sessions. From resume building to a briefing on the future of women’s health and menopause, Commissioners learned from key stakeholders in Virginia who are working to elevate women and girls across our state. We even took a quick break to enjoy Hotel Roanoke’s famous Reuben sandwich! We look forward to attending next year’s conference and learning more about the great happenings for women around the state.



NORTHERN VIRGINIA WOMEN’S ROUNDTABLE

In November 2024, the Commission hosted Northern Virginia Women’s Roundtable in partnership with Delegates Irene Shin, Vivian Watts, and Charniele Herring to elevate women’s voices ahead of the 2025 Virginia General Assembly session. Community members from across Fairfax County gathered to share their experiences and concerns on critical issues, including health care, economic security, and housing.

Participants spoke candidly about the rising cost of living, lack of affordable childcare, housing instability, and growing uncertainty about the political landscape. The stories and insights shared during the roundtable helped shape the delegates’ understanding of the challenges women in Northern Virginia face and directly informed several legislative efforts introduced during the 2025 session.

**NORTHERN VIRGINIA
WOMEN'S
ROUNDTABLE**
A DISCUSSION ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

The Fairfax County Commission for Women cordially invites you to the inaugural Northern Virginia Women's Roundtable. Join Delegate Irene Shin and additional Delegates from Northern Virginia for an engaging discussion on Women's Issues in Northern Virginia.

DATE: NOVEMBER 12, 2024 6:30-8:00PM
LOCATION: FAIRFAX COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

We look forward to engaging in meaningful dialogue as we work towards solutions to build a region where all women can thrive.

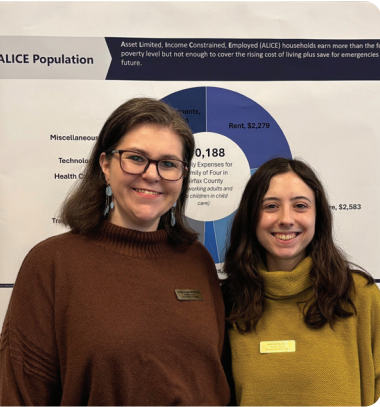
WITH GUESTS:
DELEGATE IRENE SHIN
SENATOR JENNIFER BOYSKO
DELEGATE VIVIAN WATTS
DELEGATE CHARNIELE HERRING
DELEGATE KAREN KEYS-
GAMARRA,
DELEGATE LJ COHEN
+ MORE TO COME

REGISTER NOW
For more information and to register,
visit bit.ly/2024NOWomen

HOSTED BY:
FAIRFAX COUNTY
COMMISSION for WOMEN
Promoting Opportunity for Women in-Govt



HUMAN SERVICES COUNCIL WORKING FAMILIES SUMMIT



In February 2025, Commissioners Alyssa Batchelor-Causey and Jordan Tautges represented the Commission at the Fairfax County Human Services Council's Working Families Summit. The purpose was to address the challenges faced by Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) families in Fairfax County. These are "households that earn more than the federal poverty level, but not enough to afford the basics of where they live." The Working Families Summit provided an overview of Fairfax County's ALICE population and current strategies to support them, such as

the Fairfax County Economic Mobility Pilot, which provides "monthly cash payments to eligible, randomly selected households to promote economic mobility and social capital." There were data walks and small group discussions focused on food insecurity, health care access, childcare, and housing affordability, also priorities for the Commission. The presentations, discussions, and final report will be a tremendous resource for the Commission as we continue to support working women and girls in Fairfax County.



CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

To commemorate Women's History Month in March 2025, the Commission hosted a special breakfast event at The River View in Lorton in partnership with the Fairfax County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Members of the Board of Supervisors, community leaders, and advocates throughout the county were in attendance.

Women's History Month is observed each March to recognize the contributions and achievements of women in history and today. The 2025 theme, which is set annually by the National Women's History Alliance, was Moving Forward Together! Women Educating & Inspiring Generations. During the breakfast, the Commission honored the

collective strength and influence of women who have dedicated their lives to education, mentorship, and leadership.

Alyssa Batchelor-Causey, chair of the Commission, and Evelyn Spain, first vice president of the Fairfax County NAACP branch, shared opening remarks. The keynote speaker was Jessica Berg, a Loudoun County educator and creator of a Women and Gender Studies curriculum for Loudoun County Public Schools. She led the audience in a lively discussion on the importance of women’s studies in our public schools. She also hosts an annual girls’ leadership summit to encourage young women to use their voice to advocate for women’s rights.

The event also featured interactive trivia, opportunities for networking, and a table from Domestic and Sexual Violence Services offering information ahead of Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April. Attendees also had the opportunity to donate products to Supervisor Palchik’s Menstrual Products Drive. Before departing, guests were invited to explore the onsite Turning Point Suffragist Memorial, the first national memorial dedicated to honoring the complete history of the women’s suffrage movement. The Commission provided funding to the construction of this memorial.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

After the release of the Gains, Gaps, and Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County report, the Commission received generous funding from the Department of Family Services to support the development of a strategic action plan grounded in the report’s findings and recommendations.

In partnership with SZH Consulting, the Commission launched this strategic planning process in December 2024 and finalized the plan in April 2025. Through this effort, we articulated a clear and ambitious vision for the Commission’s future and

identified two core priority areas to guide our work in Fairfax County through fiscal year 2028: (1) addressing and reducing physical and mental health disparities for women and girls; and (2) advancing economic mobility for women and girls.

The result is a bold, equity-centered roadmap that strengthens our role as convener, connector, and advocate across the county. This plan ensures our efforts remain grounded in both data and lived experience, ensuring we stay accountable to the communities we serve.





REFERENCES

Gains, Gaps & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County | Family Services

URI-PALS-Report.pdf

National Overview | UnitedForALICE

Fairfax County Economic Mobility Pilot | Neighborhood and Community Services

NWHA-2025-Theme.pdf

LIST OF PAST COMMISSIONERS (JULY 1, 2023-JUNE 30, 2025)

Liz Hernandez Ramirez,
Student Commissioner

Dana Hines,
*At-Large Underserved Minority
Commissioner*

Maria Montes Villareal,
Commissioner—Mt. Vernon District

Pamela Montesinos,
Commissioner—Sully District

Carla Post,
Commissioner—Dranesville District

Mattie Palmore,
*At-Large Underserved Minority
Commissioner*

Sabrina Rose-Smith,
Commissioner—Mason District

Donielle Scherff,
Commissioner—Dranesville District

Lanita Thweatt,
Commissioner—Mt. Vernon District

STAFF THAT SUPPORTED CFW FY2024–FY2025

Keesha Coke,
*Division Director, Fairfax County
Department of Family Services
Domestic and Sexual Violence Services*

Toni Zollicoffer,
*Chief Equity Officer, Fairfax County
Office of the County Executive*

Alexandra Hernandez,
*Liaison to the Commission for Women,
Fairfax County Department of Family
Services Domestic and Sexual
Violence Services*

Lois Kirkpatrick,
*Director of the Strategy & Project
Management Office, Fairfax-Falls
Church Community Services Board*







FAIRFAX COUNTY
COMMISSION
for **WOMEN**

*Promoting Equality for
Women & Girls*

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