



CENTER FOR WOMEN IN POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY
JOHN W. McCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GLOBAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

FACT SHEET

The [Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy \(CWPPP\)](#), based at the [McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies](#) at the [University of Massachusetts Boston](#) aims to promote diverse women's leadership to achieve more just, equitable, and responsive public and institutional policies and meaningful inclusion through the Gender, Leadership, and Public Policy (GLPP) graduate certificate and MPA-GLPP track programs; applied research on electoral representation and intersectional public policy analysis, relating to the economic, health and social well-being of women and families; and public convenings that mobilize community and women's political participation. In all its work, CWPPP's approach is antiracist. Furthermore, we tackle critical issues affecting women's lives through an intersectional lens of gender, race/ethnicity, class, and other identities.

Graduate education: The award-winning, [Gender, Leadership, and Public Policy](#) graduate certificate program has empowered nearly 1,000 women to take up leadership roles in government, non-profit organizations, and the private sector. The program was originally founded by Massachusetts political icon, Betty Taymor in 1968 to redress the dearth of women that she observed in state and national politics. Inspired by the success of the GLPP program, CWPPP was established at UMass Boston with the financial support of the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators in 1994 under Chancellor Sherry Penny's leadership. Now offered online or on-campus, it is also a track in UMass Boston's Master of Public Administration program. It is among the few graduate programs in the country that explicitly studies policy through a gender lens within an intersectional framework that considers a range of social markers when analyzing policy impacts. Students study the political theory of social change and intersectional policy analysis while gaining experience in a policy related internship. They also benefit from professional development and mentoring. Students are diverse in race/ethnicity, age, socio-economic background, and sexual orientation. Each year, about 40-50% of GLPP students are women of color.

Research: The Center's cutting-edge policy research uses an intersectional lens that links gender, race/ethnicity, and class in analyzing pressing public policy issues and studying women's leadership in civic life and government. One current project, *The Massachusetts Representation Project: Diverse Leadership for a Diverse Commonwealth*, conducted in conjunction with the four ethnic institutes of UMass Boston, offers dynamic tools to assess the extent to which electoral leadership in Massachusetts mirrors the demographic composition of the state's communities in terms of gender identity and race/ethnicity. Another project, *Profiles in Leadership: Women of Color Elected to Office in Massachusetts*, documents the history of women of color who have held public office. Additional projects include a gender equity audit study; a birth equity study focusing on postpartum black women in Greater Boston; a woman of color in the health care C-suite study; and a Women Workers Oral History Project focusing on Asian women labor activists.

Community Engagement and Public Education: CWPPP's local and regional public forums gather women from across the state and region to discuss women's political representation and to promote public policy issues that ensure economic security for all women and their families, particularly for low-wage workers, and women of color. CWPPP organized four highly successful New England Women's Policy Conferences on site in 2014, 2016, and 2018, and virtually in 2020. At the last two, a special track devoted to young women's leadership was run by IGNITE! The conference theme in 2020 was, *The Time is Now: Gender Equity, Anti-Racism and Systemic Change*. The conferences are the centerpiece of the New England Women's Policy Initiative, a regional collaboration with government and non-profit partners engaged in women's empowerment across the six New England states. In fall 2020, CWPPP cohosted with the Massachusetts Women of Color Coalition, the statewide forum, *Standing in Our Power: Women of Color Leading Change*, focused on civil leadership, voting, and electoral representation. In March 2021, the Center cohosted the *Black, Indigenous, Women of Color (BIWOC) Gathering Circle*, focusing on the health and well-being of marginalized women and policies to address them.

Promoting Women's Leadership: The Distinguished Public Service Fellows Program creates opportunities for prominent women leaders to document and share their career trajectories and learnings with emerging women leaders, including our GLPP students, and the wider community. Four leaders with exemplary public service careers in the government or non-profit sectors are selected in two-year cycles to engage in programs to nurture, mentor, and inspire the next generation of women leaders. To build a women's leadership resource portal that all women can access, the careers of these women are documented through oral histories and their papers archived at UMass Boston's Healey Library archives. The third cohort of Fellows began in January 2021. The theme of the second cohort was *Community, Women's Leadership, and the Immigrant Story*, and the theme selected by the current cohort, which for the first time comprises all women of color, is *Bold, Brave, and Beautiful*.