

2013-2014 NC Women United Candidate Slate & Bios

President

Tara Romano

1st Vice President

Heather Williams (Planned Parenthood of Central NC)

2nd Vice President

Tazra Mitchell (NC Justice Center) (filling vacancy)

Treasurer

Carey Pope (Ipas)

Secretary

Kay Paksoy (NASW-NC Chapter) (filling vacancy)

Policy Council

Emma Akpan (filling vacancy)

Laurel Sisler (filling vacancy)

Director-at-Large

Heysoll Rodriguez

Kelsey Kemp

Roberta Madden (ERA-NC Task Force)

Lauren Periera

Kara Davies (Ipas)

Rob Powell (NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault)

Governance Committee

Kathy McCullough-Testa

President (1)

Tara Romano (Raleigh, NC)

Tara currently serves as the 1st Vice President on the Board of NCWU. She started with NCWU on the planning committee of the 2006 Wake Women's Agenda Assembly, and had been the lead coordinator of the WWSAA since 2008. She has served on the board since 2008, and been on the Executive Committee since 2010. With 10 years experience in domestic violence prevention and victim support work, she is a founding member of the Triangle grassroots domestic violence prevention and advocacy organization, Project Vox. She is also an organizer with the Triangle progressive community organization Traction and an organizer with Triangle Jobs With Justice. Tara currently works at Duke Health Systems in workplace and patient safety, and has been an activist in the Triangle area for many years.

1st Vice President (1)

Heather Williams (Fayetteville, NC)

Heather currently serves as Board Secretary for NCWU, and has been on the board for one year. She works for Planned Parenthood of Central NC in the Fayetteville clinic, and has organized and attended various advocacy events around the Triangle--including the "Not in Her Shoes" rally on Halifax Mall and the Duke Women's Health Summit in Durham. Heather has strong grassroots advocacy skills, and has successfully mobilized and supervised numerous Planned Parenthood volunteers in her community work.

2nd Vice President (1)

Tazra Mitchell (Raleigh, NC)

Tazra currently serves as a Director of Policy on the Board of NCWU and has been on the board for one year. Tazra currently works as a Public Policy Fellow at the NC Budget and Tax Center, and previously served as a Legislative Assistant to Representative Becky Carney.

Treasurer (1)

Carey Pope (Raleigh, NC)

Carey currently serves as a Director of Policy on the Board of NCWU and has been on the board for one year. Carey recently joined Ipas as an Advocacy Communications Strategist. She previously served for two years as Executive Director of NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina.

Secretary (1)

Kay Paksoy (Raleigh, NC)

Kay currently serves as a Director of Policy on the Board of NCWU and has been on the board for one year. Kay is the Director of Advocacy, Policy and Legislation and Registered Lobbyist for the North Carolina chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Kay has extensive experience both in the United States and abroad working with youth and women's health programs.

Policy Council (2)

Emma Akpan (Raleigh, NC)

Emma is an activist in Raleigh, North Carolina. She's worked with Blueprint NC, a coalition of advocacy charitable organizations for two years as 360° Support, providing technical support for the coalition partners. A graduate of Duke Divinity School, Emma is an ordained deacon in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Emma is a volunteer for NARAL Pro-Choice NC as a canvasser and helps with event logistics. In her free time, she enjoys running and leading a book club for her church.

Laurel Sisler (Chapel Hill, NC)

Laurel is a recently graduated with a Master of Social Work from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's School of Social Work. She has served as the Gender Violence Prevention Program Leader at the Duke University Women's Center, as well as a Care Coordinator and Intern with the Center for Maternal and Infant Health at UNC Hospital. She also currently serves on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Social Workers NC Chapter.

Directors-at-Large (5)

Heysoll Rodriguez (Raleigh, NC)

Heysoll is currently a General Organizer with the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union. In this work she has led several campaigns in contested NLRB elections throughout the Northeast Region and across the country and assisted local Union Chapters on their organizing efforts. She has also served as an Organizer with the Service Employee International Union and as Liaison Officer with the Global March Against Child Labor. She is eager to bring her bilingual skills and organizing experience to the NCWU Board. Heysoll completed her undergraduate education in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, and her Masters in Labor Studies at the University of Massachusetts.

Kelsey Kemp (Durham, NC)

Kelsey received her Bachelor's degree in Political Science and a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Oklahoma. Before moving to the Triangle area, Kelsey worked as a communications specialist and lobbyist for the Oklahoma Public Employees Association in Oklahoma City. In her spare time, Kelsey enjoys exploring all of the activities North Carolina has to offer. Kelsey is married and is the proud owner of two spoiled cats.

Roberta Madden (Asheville, NC)

Roberta currently serves as Co-Director of *RATIFY ERA-NC*, an organization dedicated to making the Equal Rights Amendment a part of the U.S. Constitution. The current focus is on congressional resolutions to end the deadline and put ERA into the Constitution after three more states ratify. Roberta also serves on the boards of Building Bridges of Asheville, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Corporation of the Swannanoa Valley, and the Southern Mutual Help Association, as well as the YWCA's Advocacy Committee. Roberta has considerable experience with the League of Women Voters, the YWCA (where she was employed as Director of Racial and Social Justice for 18 years), the American Association of University Women, Business and Professional Women of NC, and other organizations.

Lauren Periera (Greensboro, NC)

Lauren is a recent graduate from the Women's and Gender Studies Master of Arts Program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She also holds a certificate in Nonprofit Management from Duke University. Her work has included recruiting and coordinating volunteers for the Southeastern Women's Studies Association (SEWSA) in 2013, as well as screening proposals and supporting strategic planning for this event. Lauren has also been a committed volunteer for Equality NC, and spent much time fighting the Amendment One ballot measure.

Kara Davies (Raleigh, NC)

Kara currently works as a Program Coordinator in the Special Projects Unit at Ipas. This work includes coordinating country teams to support ongoing project works, contributing to annual program planning, developing and monitoring project budgets, and supporting the Regional Directors for various projects. Kara received her Master of Public Administration from Columbia University in New York, and is the Founder of Strikes for Pediatric Strokes NC, an annual fundraising initiative to provide support services to children and families affected by pediatric stroke.

Governance Committee (1)

Kathy McCullough-Testa (Duck, NC)

Kathy currently serves as a Director of Policy on the NCWU Board. She has served on the NCWU Board for two years, and resides in Duck, NC. Kathy is the Owner of KMT Consultants, and has previously served as Special Events and Community Information Coordinator with the Town of Duck. Kathy holds a certificate in Nonprofit Management from Duke University, and received her Master of Public Administration in Information Technology from Carnegie Mellon University-Heinz College.